The
COMMONWEAL
A Weekly Review of Literature the Arts and Public Affairs
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Week by Week

A SECTION in *Scribner's Magazine* for June is called "Advertising the Next War," and is as disturbing in its personal way as a Czechoslovakian week-end election. Noting that the United States' average breathing-spell between wars has been twenty-five years, Mr. Ted Patrick, who arranged the pages, reminds us that whenever the next war does come (whenever; not if), "advertising men will be asked to prepare advertisements selling war bonds; whipping up enthusiasm for meatless, heatless, wheatless, gasless, and whatnotless days; and calling for volunteers." Four experts then present soul-quaking professional ads calling for young men, "every able-bodied man between the ages of 18 and 35." These pages cannot help but make you search your conscience and test your theories of war and peace against your fortitude. It is assumed that the war is fought abroad to protect our homes: the "yellow feet" have not, apparently, been able to "reach American soil." The "yellow theme" could probably be altogether figurative, but there is more than a suspicion that the enemy is of the "yellow" races. The psychology is to force the unprotected individual citizen into the crowd. This crowd is of one mind and includes as it seems everyone, father, mother, sister, best girl, every pretty girl, everyone with guts and love of home. And the crowd is certain of victory, already riding the most exciting bandwagon in the world. But where does the crowd get its authority? Not from reason; not from moral argument. The authority is undefined and is anonymous. It is assumed and exercised by that most certain and material individual, the mob. When war comes, the problem of war is archaic. The formation of the mob is left in evil obscurity. The individual submerges himself in something no one describes to him, or else he is yellow in every literally devastating meaning. Well might we think now, before the three-line front page of the morning tabloid proclaims "U. S. In War!" Few individuals, pressed by the show of unanimity, marshalled by the cleverest men, led by persons who are leaders, impelled by people they love, confused by the impossibility to find facts, would have courage to be yellow.

Are You Yellow?

THE COMMONWEAL is most encouraged to announce that since publishing our list fo contributing editors, two men, then traveling abroad, have agreed to collaborate with us. We are now able to welcome as contributing editors: Mr. George N. Shuster, long associated with THE COMMONWEAL as managing editor, keen analyst of post-war Europe and remarkably productive and inspiring student of intellectual and literary currents of the past and present; and Professor Carlton J. H. Hayes, leading historian and universally recognized authority on the development and interplay of modern nationalisms. THE COMMONWEAL trusts that increasingly as it proceeds, it may incorporate in its pages the knowledge and wisdom which its collaborators have already so generously made available to this project. Our contributing editors now are:

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World Combat and Unrest

BELOW the Rio Grande a minor revolution flared up, with General Cedillo taking to the heavily wooded hills for a guerilla campaign against the Federal troops rushed to the state of San Luis Potosi. Reports were meager due to heavy government censorship, but Cárdenas sought speedy suppression to stop its spread to other sections of Mexico. Across the Pacific, Japan had scored another major victory in the capture of strategic Suchow and the Chinese were forming new lines. The fundamental situation of winning costly battles and ultimately losing the war continued to confront the Japanese. A monkey wrench was thrown into Italo-French negotiations when Mussolini demanded that France close her borders to further arms for the Loyalists. The Spanish battle lines remained substantially unchanged and evidence of new equipment pushed farther into the future the possibility of Loyalist collapse. All Europe was aroused by the ups and downs of the Czech crisis. Hitler is believed to be opposed to attacking the Czechs, since he realizes that he might thereby precipitate a European war, when breakdown of certain units on the march on Vienna and other factors clearly demonstrate that the German army is not ready. The Fuehrer knows that he can obtain much by economic pressure, for Czechoslovakia is land-locked and Germany, if Hungary and Poland cooperate, could ruin Czech foreign trade by charging prohibitive transit rates at the only feasible outlets. Germany and Austria also account for one-fifth of the Czech foreign trade. For her grain fields Czechoslovakia must import fertilizers; for her industries mineral oils, raw cotton and wool. However, partial mobilization of the army threatens dangerous incidents on the border and Hitler is said to be deeply rankled by the reports that the Czech army plus Franco-British solidarity had prevented another German coup. A terrifying thought that the fate of millions hangs on the sensibilities of an individual whose continuance in power demands unlimited presitge.

Little Girls, Mad

SEVERAL years ago a New York revue went straight to the heart of its audience by depicting a harassed metropolite in a telephone booth trying with frenzied unsuccess to get a local number. Finally, perceiving that the tenants of the booths to the right and left of him had secured instantaneous connections with London and Shanghai, he hit upon the inspiration of calling a friend whom he knew to be on a liner in mid-Atlantic, and requesting him to relay the message back to the desired number in New York. This worked like a charm. The skit gave great and understandable pleasure as a satire. But it was no more fantastic or funny than the actual telephone situation on the European continent during the recent crisis—or perhaps by this time we should say, one of the recent crises. Germany and Italy united in refusing to transmit telephone calls from Paris to Prague. What they meant by this we do not know, but they cannot have meant anything in the lowly and literal field of practicality, since an international agreement whereby Paris has a direct connection to Warsaw through Germany was observed, so that after some delay the messages were routed to Prague from that city. What it really suggests to us is two little girls who are mad at a third little girl and who try very hard to keep a fourth little girl from speaking to her.

The Plough and the Stars

OF ALL the nation-wide activities of the Church in the United States one of the most hopeful is the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, the proceedings of which, for the November, 1937, meeting, have just come off the press. This paper-bound volume contains the addresses of twenty-seven persons who assisted at the meeting, speakers representing the hierarchy (Bishops Boyle and Muench and the Apostolic Delegate), persons devoted to specifically Catholic rural enterprises, the United States Department of Agriculture, and several independent clergymen and laymen who are not directly concerned with rural problems, but who have devoted time and attention to them because of their great importance in our national life. The casual reader, more interested in the general problems which are involved in the relation between the agricultural and industrial elements in our national economy, may be a little disappointed to find so much space given to specific problems of education and welfare work; yet he must remember that one of the chief difficulties which confronts the rural population today, threatening its stability and deeply affecting its social prestige, is its lack of attractiveness to the ordinary citizen; two of the largest factors in this lack of attractiveness are the few and poor educational facilities offered in farm regions and the "poverty" of the farmer, which is so real a thing—however unnatural—as to make welfare work essential.

ONE ALL-IMPORTANT, obvious, yet neglected social fact must ever be borne in mind when we consider the problem of American agriculture. The traditional pattern of the farmer's life—as a producer primarily for the consumption of his family, a producer who, out of his abundance sells his surplus in order to buy that which he cannot raise, and who, by this very process of buying, makes possible the production of the commodities

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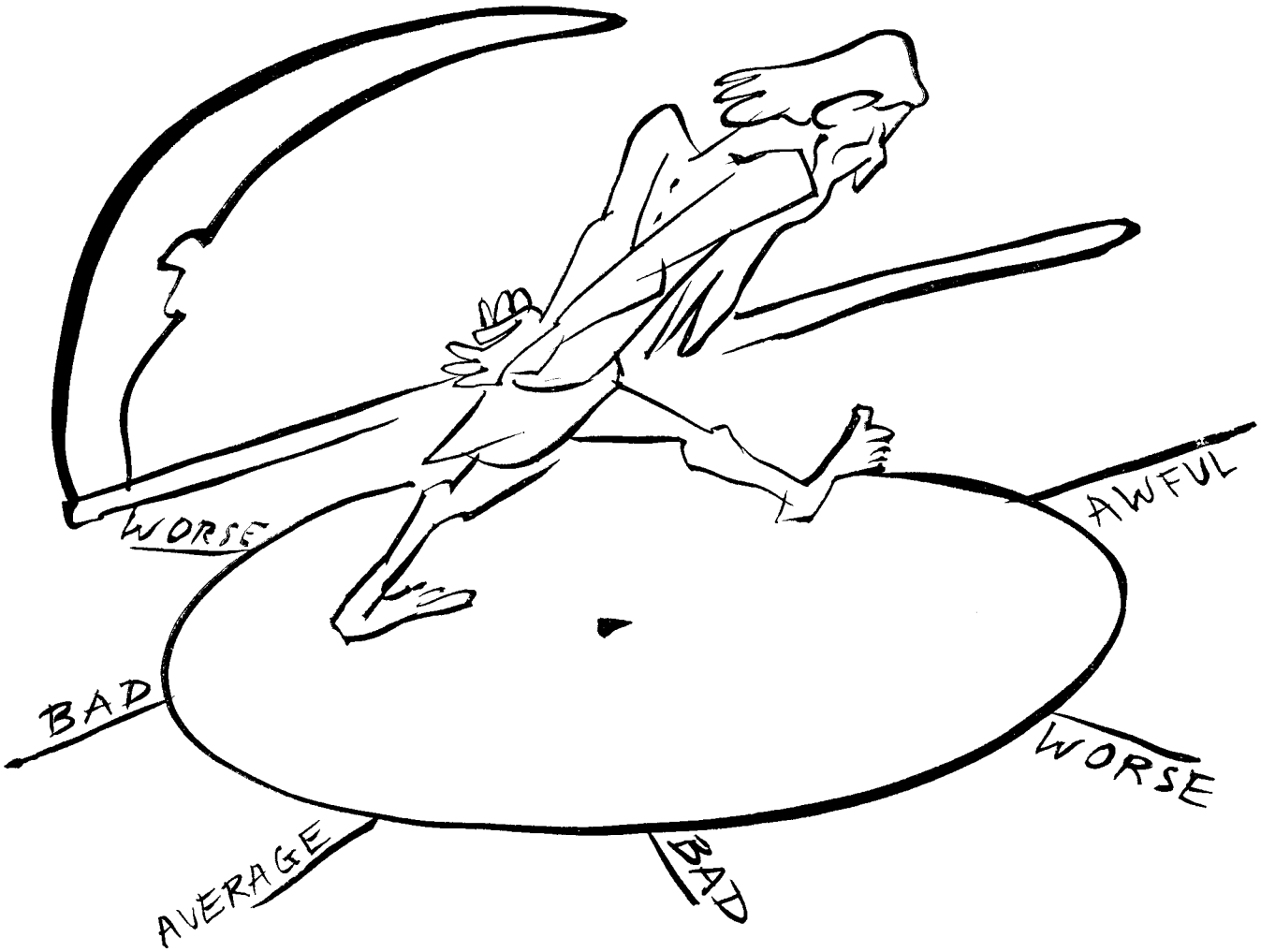

TIME MARCHES ON

which he wishes to buy—the pattern which inspires all those who look hopefully upon farming as a way of life and the pattern which is so basic in our minds that we almost can think in no other terms, still exists, but that is all. Two disintegrating forces have been at work destroying this pattern and the time has come when, as Father LaFarge puts it, "a decision has to be taken by the rural people of the United States themselves." These disintegrating forces are the increase of farm tenancy and the industrialization of farming, the former tending to accelerate the latter. These are no new things. We remember the anger of William Cobbett at the dispossession of the English yeoman farmer by the sheepherding and cattle-raising interests, a long-drawn-out process closely resembling that of the modern shift to specialized, large-scale "profit-cropping." The result of increasing both farm tenancy and crop industrialism has been to create that inexcusable abomination, that self-contradiction, the rural proletariat, a farming class without soil and consequently "uprooted" in a peculiarly poignant sense of the expression. There is a genuine possibility here for united action by different groups advocating the sounder tradition of farm family economy.

Unity and the Christian Year

INCREASING secularization of American life due to education without religion, the loosening of family ties, preoccupation with economic opportunities and necessities and other factors, tends to conceal an important counter tendency. It is not widely known that the general observance of Christmas in this country is scarcely more than a century old and that nation-wide observance of Easter is even more recent. Although Christmastide still seems largely devoted to the problem of the right present for Uncle Ned, there is a vague sense of Christian brotherliness to be noted throughout the land. Easter, too, for those who have, revolves around the purchase and display of new finery, but none the less Good Friday holidays and popular Easter sunrise services are on the increase. Now, after a study of two years, a committee of the Federal Council of Churches has issued a pamphlet advocating the observance, "in its simpler form," of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, a sequence "still in use in all Greek, Roman, Lutheran and Anglican Churches." Dr. Fred Winslow Adams, committee chairman, who describes this proposal in the current *Christian Century,* also says that "there probably should

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also be developed a calendar remembering the names of outstanding saints and moral leaders, whose birthdays could be noted, just as we in this country observe the anniversaries of Washington, Lincoln and Lee." If the great bulk of American Catholics are won to the Liturgical Revival, to be intellectually and spiritually nourished by the prayers of Sunday and daily Mass and of the Divine Office and if Protestants, too, more consciously relate their daily lives to the great realities in the cycle of the Christian year, Americans will live more closely united to God and approach the grave perplexities of the day in a common spirit of charity and zeal.

Relief and the Utilities

THE CHANGED complexion of the Recovery and Relief bill as it came to the Senate from the Appropriations Committee stirred the active interest of all relief and recovery doctors, and Senators on the floor were quick to prescribe. The most dramatic change — the amendment preventing PWA expenditures or loans to utilities which would compete with private companies—certainly presented a real issue. The utility problem ought to be separated from the problem of relief so that however it is solved the unemployed will not suffer any more than is inevitable. There seems no reason why the utility industry should be simple, that is either all private or all public. The government should preserve its right to institute yardsticks, provided its cost accounting is unassailable. Local governments should be permitted to have their own utility systems if local citizens are convinced the private firms are giving them a raw deal. Groups with a genuine market and without sufficient capital to build a utility, such as rural cooperatives, should have access to money and credit equal to that of the private quasi-monopolies, even when no one will furnish it but the government. The community must have power to coordinate electricity production with the general problem of conservation and land usage. Undoubtedly, however, the utility industry has a most just complaint in the uncertainty of government policy, and the government shouldn't feel free to steal the utilities because the latter have not always been notably sanitary in dealing with charges and finance.

Widening the Circle

THE MACHINE was indicted once and for all by Samuel Butler in "Erewhon." It was indicted in more popular and not less powerful terms only yesterday in Carel Kapek's "R.U.R." But though the concept of the machine coming alive and ruling its creator —the correct name of this concept is Technological Unemployment—is by now perfectly familiar, it never loses its power to disturb. A current examination of it by Mal J. Stuart—"Robots in Office," in the *New Republic*—shows what a very concrete specter it is to the approximately four million office workers in this country. It touches them in two ways: it mechanizes and dehumanizes their work, under the necessity of specializing it and speeding it up to meet the requirements of office machinery; and it makes more and more of them subject to piece-work pay and final unemployment, as the work gets specialized and speeded up to the point where more and more of them can be dispensed with. "The dictaphone," says Miss Stuart, "displaces one out of every two stenographers; the bookkeeping machine displaces about two out of every three bookkeepers; the check-writing and billing machines displace three out of every four check-writers; the statistical machine displaces four out of every five statistical workers; and the tabulator, sorter and punch machines displace eleven out of every twelve tabulating clerks." Even if these particular figures should be tempered somewhat (we are inclined to think they should), and even when the compensating balance of employment in the fields of manufacture and maintenance is fully allowed for—even so and even then, there can be no essential difference of opinion among thoughtful human beings regarding what these figures indicate. They indicate the contracting circle in which we allow ever greater numbers of men and women to be pressed to death—as if we were dazed or bewitched. For we need not do it—we can widen out the circle repeatedly by developing new frontiers as we shorten the old by machinery. The main means is undoubtedly proper unionization of labor: unionization so widespread that it is the norm, so flexible that it is normal—and unionization freed of the stresses of political and internecine combat. Such unionization is the first of all methods available for bringing about a "planned economy" acceptable to the public mind.

Sniping at Capitalism

NOTHING more certainly arouses the passions of consistent conservatives than sniping at capitalism by persons who claim not to be revolutionaries, and this practise stirs thoroughgoing revolutionaries in about the same way. People seem more attracted to whole hogs. A man with a definitely bad character, when it is a strong character, is generally better loved than one with a compromising character, even though the uncompromising bad man accomplishes much more harm. Thoroughly destructive critics get a better hearing than the more rationally sceptical and temperate.

Sniping is logically bad *per se,* however, only in one circumstance, when the sniper is insincere.

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On the left, there are undoubtedly some conspirators, pretending to disapprove of revolution while trying to undermine the economic system by narrow attacks and thus to weaken it for utter destruction. What these individuals genuinely want is the revolution, and not the reforms and modifications which make up their specious demands.

On the right are the demagogues who make brutal public attacks on unpopular elements of capitalism while retaining in their hearts a passionate attachment to the profits of capitalism which come their own particular way. At a showdown the demagogue sacrifices the reform he has bleated for, if the reform would upset the favors of the general system he too much appreciates. There are conscious demagogues, and unconscious ones; often they seem deliberately unconscious. The whole breed make sweeping and hair-raising condemnation in principle and in theory, but when workers act to apply the principle and theory the workers seem with suspicious inevitability to go astray.

Everywhere there are liable to be mean men who snipe viciously out of an unaccepted sense of inferiority. Envy is their capital, and it produces personal remarks about personal riches and disappointed expression of disgust with the whole business. Such folk will doubtless always whine, under any economy whatsoever, and they are not the sort who get things undone any more than they get them done.

But there is a more principled sniping at capitalism, which seems just what capitalism needs. Capitalism is not a logical construction from clear theories. It is not a single, unitary structure. Even defining it, as Virgil Michel and the correspondents stimulated by him have proved in these columns, demands complex historical reasoning, an effort at averaging and an addition of compromising riders. It is precisely because capitalism is an organic growth, with roots reaching back to pre-capitalism, and with shoots—one can hope—reaching forward to post-capitalism, that it deserves respect. No one should want to wipe out everything that some man or other might not classify as a true characteristic of capitalism. A person who didn't want to cut out some of the admitted characteristics of capitalism would be an incredible creature.

Sniping ought not to be done for the emotional thrill. You should be willing to kill what you're shooting at. This is a grave responsibility, for institutional mayhem is serious and one must be confident that something is alive and growing to do the work of the sacrificed member. Still, the sense of responsibility can be too paralyzing. Attacking a method or aim of the present economic set-up is not attacking a man. Political economy is not the most important thing in the world, and no particular economy is anywhere near the most important. Men are extremely inventive and tough and can get necessary jobs done by more ways than the one capitalism dictates. A reasonable amount of irresponsibility is essential in dealing with the system.

A good example of an attack on capitalism by people who do not favor a complete economic revolution nor the destruction of private property is furnished by the recent manifesto of the Catholic Alliance of St. Louis. This manifesto announces as the second of five propositions (the others concern social problems not identifiable with economy): "An uncompromising opposition to present day finance capitalism, which we believe to be immoral in that: A. It is acquisitive of its nature and makes greed the chief motive for human activity. B. It separates ownership from responsibility. C. It degrades the workers to the status of a tool of production for other men's profit." This is so general an attack that it hardly sounds like sniping, but it is a conception that involves the alteration of capitalism without a totalitarian revolution. The rest of the manifesto is directed chiefly at "Responsibility," and Ownership without responsibility—a modern evil." This type of sniping can be genuinely valuable, distinguishing various elements of capitalism and indicating the falseness of the too often accepted dilemma: either fascism or socialism. Until developed by detailed application it is bound to sound demagogic, but it cannot be condemned out of hand.

The description of capitalism embodied in this attack contains a double proposition fairly usual with historians, which makes one loath to be classed as a defender of capitalism: "It is acquisitive in its nature. . . . It degrades the workers to the status of a tool of production for other men's profit." Accumulated wealth is put to productive use by its owners (except by mistake) only when the production adds still more to the accumulation. You don't start a shoe factory for the fun of it; not unless it pays you a reasonable return. The labor of a distinct group is necessary to add to that motivating capital accumulation. This group is paid for its labor by a contrasting and unharmonious process, since it does not share in the increment of the business capital which it did not put up. As long as that condition can be considered by large blocks of citizens as dominant in capitalism, it will remain a target for cannonading and sniping.

If this is the dominant characteristic of capitalism it deserves attack, and even if it isn't, there are other attributes richly meriting a criticism that cannot help but seem carping to those observers who feel first of all that the system should, as a whole, be preserved, or that, at the other extreme, it should be altogether abolished.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

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The Labor Movement

By VIRGIL MICHEL

THE FIRST heated excitement over recent developments in our labor movement seems to have subsided somewhat. But few will deny that this is only a temporary subsidence, or that one of the greatest uncertainties we are facing in the future is a vastly increasing labor movement. That such an event will affect many more persons than the laborers themselves is likewise almost too obvious to mention.

Today the citizens of our country might be divided roughly into the following economic classes:

(1) The very few who own an enormous amount of the wealth of the country. Concentration of wealth into their hands has gone on at a giant pace since the turn of the century.

(2) The class of moderately well-to-do, salaried or fee-earning persons, business "executives," salesmen, teachers, doctors, lawyers, clergymen, government employees, etc.

(3) The smaller individual owners of business enterprises or of farms, i. e., family-size farms. This class has decreased alarmingly in the last decades through the absorption of their holdings by larger business monopolies or else by financial interests.

(4) The skilled craftsmen and laborers. With the advent of large-scale machinery this class has decreased considerably in favor of the next group.

(5) The unskilled laborers, whose numbers have been increasing rapidly in conjunction with the conditions mentioned above.

(6) The army of relief workers. This group is a depression phenomenon, but is nevertheless bound to remain with us in some degree hereafter. In so far as these persons have been organizing in order to take care of their interests and to make their demands on the government, and in so far as they are taking a permanent status of governmental dependency for granted, we are witnessing the formation of an articulate and fixed lower class among us.

The general tendency in regard to all these classes is the slight increasing of class (1) and (2) and the vast increasing of class (5), the growing disappearance of classes (3) and (4) and the probable fixity and slow growth of class (6). That is, this is the tendency in terms of the accepted ideology under which our economic society has been functioning. So much it is necessary to remember in order to understand how a growing labor movement among us is bound to affect the whole of our society.

The phenomenon of the movement is with us, and it cannot escape being discussed in many tones and tempers. The conclusions calmly arrived at, or flung violently at opponents, will differ greatly by reason of the diverse bases from which the disputants start, the accepted ideology of economic liberalism, of leftist principles, or of rightist views. It is for this reason that the Catholic, who dares not shirk his duty of social action, must view the situation in terms of fundamental Christian principles rather than in terms of any of the accepted idols of our confused times.

In questions of labor and the principles involved, we need to start anew from the rock-bottom of sound Catholic philosophy. This is true in particular of the concepts of ownership and of labor, of their twofold character, individual and social, and still more of the proper relation between labor and ownership. In this regard it must be noted that recent books on Christian ethics have practically ignored the title of labor to ownership, thus swallowing whole the modern pagan concept of the apotheosis of ownership, absentee or passive ownership in particular, and departing far from the traditional scholastic and Christian point of view on the matter. And that, in spite of the fact that Pope Leo asked and answered so unmistakably in the "Rerum Novarum" of 1891:

> Is it just that the fruit of a man's sweat and labor should be enjoyed by another? As effects follow their cause, so it is just and right that the results of labor should belong to him who has labored.

A similar confusion has characterized the discussions among us Catholics on the morality of the sit-down strike. We have failed on the one hand to separate the bare question of sit-down striking from the accompaniments of labor domineering from the outside, from various violations of law and morality through the use of mass force, etc. A laboring group as a whole, that has been working with a company for some time, gets to have a certain priority of right in its job. In dealing with a different topic Dr. Goetz Briefs, the eminent but exiled German Catholic student of social problems, writes:

> It is indeed entirely conceivable that the job, which is really a functional form of property, might usurp the place of material property ["The Proletariat," page 248].

This statement is in full harmony with views expressed in the famous social encyclicals. But if a job is really a functional form of property, then whose property is it?

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Until I have been convinced of the contrary, it seems to me the thesis should stand that where a group of laborers have a just cause for striking, there the sit-down strike is also morally justifiable. The strike is then for the redressing of unjust treatment and the sit-down is for the holding of the job as their functional property. I have seen no Catholic argument in condemnation of the sit-down strike that was based on the pertinent concepts stressed in the social encyclicals; I have seen only such as argue from the basis of the modern, pagan conception of ownership that gradually insinuated itself into our juridical ideology under the pressure of vested interests. However, in the concrete application of any moral principle the attending circumstances of a case must be considered, since "circumstances alter cases." I happen to know of no concrete case of the sit-down strike whose attending circumstances I could justify.

We are, according to some, facing a coming wave of laws prohibiting sit-down strikes altogether. If that is true, then laws equally stringent should be passed to forbid private police systems, spying, etc., and to enforce just remuneration of all laborers—else we shall be going through a one-sided development that bodes no good for the future peace of the country. In speaking thus, I do not want to imply that I see any real or permanent remedy for social ills in an increased passing of laws.

One of the legacies of economic liberalism was the prohibition, legal in many countries, of association for economic improvement. This prohibition was violated by capitalists long before the right of labor to form unions was generally recognized. Today the vast monopolies and centralized corporations of capitalists have forced the laborers to join unions in sheer self-defense. More than that, the nation-wide business combinations force the laborers into nation-wide unions in order to be able to meet giant power and pressure by equally gigantic force and impetus.

The very exigencies of the present capitalistic economy have brought about the large-scale labor movement we are witnessing today. The latter is distinctly a product of modern capitalism. This is true even of its spirit, as far as one can judge from the facts. That is, the labor movement seems to be as much motivated by the desire to get all it can for itself as ever the big capitalists have been. This is not *per se* a condemnation of labor at all, but merely another way of stating that the vision of labor seems to be just as narrow and individualistic economically, as that of capitalism has been.

At all events, the small owners of today, the class (3) above that is disappearing, is being rubbed out not only by the giant business octopuses, chain-stores, and the like; the labor unions are helping along as well. How could it be otherwise, when the labor unions have been formed as a weapon against large-scale industry? Labor unions have not been taught to judge individual cases on their own merit, but only to apply the same nation-wide scale of procedure in all cases. I am thinking here of a number of small owners who tried to apply papal principles in as far as it was possible under the circumstances. The result has at times led near to cynicism.

The *Wanderer* of January 27 contains the following item:

> Any attempt "in the direction of autonomous vocational groups" will be but a waste of time and effort as long as the present mentality of organized labor and the policies of labor leadership remain unchanged. The Wanderer Printing Company, for instance, has introduced an annual wage system based on the union wage scale, guaranteeing shop employees an average annual income of $2,100, and intended ultimately to lead to an employer-employee enterprise. Union interference smashed our plans, in which union spokesmen, according to their own statements, were "not interested," and now, with the militant organized labor methods, endangers the continued existence of our technical department with "the consequent distress" among the employees, creating a condition against which the Holy Father warns very specifically in "Quadragesimo Anno."

I am personally acquainted with the Wanderer case. The owners are among the most social-minded and Catholic-minded men I know of. The company has paid no dividends since 1930, but has kept its men on full time during the entire depression. There was always a fine natural familiarity and good feeling between employers and employees alike. The new plan was inaugurated in March, 1937, after general discussion of it with all concerned. For months all weekly checks were paid according to it and there was general good feeling everywhere. Some of the men had always belonged to the unions and others not; the employers had left it to the men. But the unions had insisted on complete unionization, and the delegates refused to have the Wanderer employees come in on the discussion and refused to consider the existing Wanderer plan at all. After unionization, productive work of the shop fell off by 15 percent during a period of three months. Something has gone wrong with the spirit of the place, although the employers at times violate the union rule of not fraternizing with their men. Christmas, 1937, was the first in the long history of the Wanderer which did not see a family exchange of greetings and presents, and the employers "simply felt rotten," as did many of the men.

In recent negotiations the men were called in over the protests of the union delegates, and hedged on the question of the previous Wanderer plan. Somehow or other they did not remember exactly or know much about it, although hundreds

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of weekly checks, as mentioned above, had been paid according to it. To my mind there is here a clear case of union intimidation of the men and a forced lowering of their morale, if not of their characters. I cannot see how it could be otherwise in view of the circumstances and in view of the oath the union demands of all its members. Here is a copy of the oath (italics mine):

Obligation of Members

Every person admitted as a member of this union shall subscribe to the following obligation, which shall apply only to matters pertaining to the printing industry:

"I (give name) hereby solemnly and sincerely swear (or affirm) that I will not reveal any business or proceedings of any meeting of this or any subordinate union to which I may hereafter be attached, unless by order of the union, except to those whom I know to be members in good standing thereof; that I will, without equivocation or evasion, and to the best of my ability, abide by the constitution, by-laws and the adopted scale of prices of any union to which I may belong; that I will at all times support the laws, regulations and decisions of the International Typographical Union, and will carefully avoid giving aid or succor to its enemies, and use all honorable means within my power to procure employment for members of the International Typographical Union in preference to others; *that my fidelity to the union and my duty to the members thereof shall in no sense be interfered with by any allegiance that I may now or hereafter owe to any other organization, social, political or religious, secret or otherwise:* that I will belong to no society or combination composed wholly or partly of printers, with the intent or purpose to interfere with the trade regulations or influence or control the legislation of this union; that I will not wrong a member, or see him or her wronged, if in my power to prevent. To all of which I pledge my most sacred honor" [From The Book of Laws of the International Typographical Union. In Effect January First, 1938].

Another instance that has come to my notice personally within the last few months was that of the E. Hackner church furniture company. A strike had been called and negotiations here also had to be taken up with an out-of-town delegate. When the Hackners told the delegate that during several years of the depression the company had kept some of their workers on the job at great loss to themselves, the delegate laughed in their faces and would not grant even the possibility of such an attitude on the part of employers. I am afraid that in this case such a self-sacrificing attempt to tide over the workers during a depression is not going to be made so very readily again.

The modern labor movement is nothing but a natural phenomenon of modern capitalism. It is labor's belated answer to the unspoken but most definite challenge of capitalism. As this challenge arose out of the class struggle inherent in modern capitalism, so the answer is as distinctly in terms of a struggle of class against class. Woe to whatever comes between the combatants! And the end? When two such giants come to grips, and when they have struggled for some time in the spirit of class antagonism, there can be only one outcome—the domination of one by the other. If capitalism wins out, the domination will have to be organized and totalitarian in order to be secure, and we shall have fascism. If labor wins out, it will have to consolidate its victory by a similar totalitarian organization, and we shall have our own version of a dictatorship of the proletariat. There is no other possibility, if the antagonists are content to do battle within the framework of the capitalistic order and of the liberalist-capitalist philosophy of life.

The above dilemma can be avoided only by steering a new course away from the ideals of capitalist civilization. The first requisite for this is the consciousness that capitalism as we have had it is dying and should die. The second requisite is consciousness of the principles of a Christian reconstruction of the social order and of various movements of today that are working in such direction. The duty of the Catholic laborer today, as well as the duty of every Catholic as a social apostle in regard to the labor movement, is twofold:

(1) A whole-hearted support of labor organization in so far as labor is working to eliminate the injustices and abuses it now suffers. This is a Christian duty in terms of the present capitalist set-up which cannot be changed overnight.

(2) An equally whole-hearted and strenuous effort at all times to awaken labor (and employers as well) to the wider problem of Christian social reconstruction, and to have labor expend its efforts also in this direction. For the present this will mean chiefly the gradual formulation by labor of what it considers the planks in a platform for a true Christian order: cooperation, co-partnership, restriction or abolition of absentee ownership, a financial system operating for the common good of all, and the like; as well as support of the various movements already mentioned in a preceding article: the cooperative movement, personalism, the corporative order, the distributist-agrarian movement.

The labor movement is possibly the most vital and important movement of the day in our country. Beyond the movement as such, however, lies the still more important question of whether it will continue to operate within the limits of the present capitalistic set-up and go down with the latter, or whether it will turn its attention to the creation of a better social order in which not one class only but all men will be the beneficiaries of our modern culture and civilization.

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Polish Problems

By T. C. H. Y.

THE FOLLOWING words, of the Berlin correspondent of the London *Times*, are fully substantiated by a study of the Polish press, from which it is clear that the Polish State shows acute signs of internal disunity that at any moment may result in a disruption of international consequence.

> . . . Political and economic reactions inside Poland have for some time been causing considerable concern among German officials, who are anxious to have a stable and prosperous buffer-state between Germany and the Communist homeland. Disquieting reports are current here about the Polish government's prestige and authority, and it is felt that neither bastion nor buffer will be of much avail in default of a strong hand at Warsaw.

When Vice-Premier Kwiatkowski submitted to the Seym an outline of the National Budget for 1938, the Polish newspapers voiced the public's deep alarm. *Goniec Warszawski* wrote:

> It is really necessary to bring to light the fact that the State is incurring a debt of 500,000,000 zlotys to cover the Budget expenses, the identical sum that was borrowed in 1936, and—approximately—also in 1937. This policy of the government brings with it serious consequences. The loans are floated chiefly internally, which means that the government takes the whole reserve of the standing monetary market, dipping its hand into the purses of municipalities and cooperatives.

Such a deficit might arouse no serious perturbation in a country that was able to support its population, where it might be attributed to temporary depression. But it is a very different matter in a state where the economic position is precarious to the breaking-point.

One who has made a long and careful investigation of living conditions for the Central European peasantry wrote as follows in 1934 of agricultural life in Poland, where the overwhelming bulk of the people are of the peasantry:

> The economic position of the peasantry, such as it was, has been completely undermined by the world agricultural crisis. . . . The middle peasant (farming about ten acres) has no net profit even in normal times, the whole of the crops raised being needed to feed his family. The lowest class of peasant—the dwarf-holder—was fortunate if he could keep his family alive, and more fortunate still if he could find employment for himself on a nearby estate, leaving wife or sons to look after the small farm.
>
> The average wages paid by the estates to their workers amounted to from 8d to 1/- per day for men and 5d to 8d a day for women workers. That was before the oncoming depression brought salary "cuts." . . . By 1932 the highest wages obtainable even in harvest time were 7d a day for men and 5d a day for women.
>
> Despite the fact that the average market value of the food needed to maintain a peasant family of four amounts to about 4d a day, it is scarcely surprising in the light of these figures to find that the standard of living in the middle class of peasant has fallen to the standard of the lowest class, while the plight of the small-holders at the bottom of the social scale was, at the end of 1933, catastrophic.

That this was no exaggeration when the words were penned is borne out by many other first-hand authorities. That the situation remains as bad, or worse, today, is all too clear. The Congress of the Peasant Party, held at Cracow at the beginning of March this year, displayed great truculence toward the government. Representing some 20,000,000 peasants out of a total population of 35,000,000, the Congress refused to align itself with the Camp of National Unity, demanding instead a return to democratic principles.

There can be no doubt that the financial state of Poland, and its economic ills, are largely traceable to the bureaucratic system.

"There is no consistent policy," complained Deputy V. Celyvycz, speaking recently on the government's failure to grapple with the problem of its minorities. "Each governmental department follows its own line, with disastrous results."

The other evil of bureaucracy is still more ominous, showing as it does a lack of the social morale without which no nation can survive, and the loss of which has presaged many a nation's fall.

Even district governors (*starosta*), who might be expected to show a fair standard of integrity, are in numerous cases guilty of flagrant dishonesty. The following are a few of such cases, taken, a few months ago, from the Polish press:

> Czarnocki, former district governor, sentenced by the local court of Gdynia to two years' imprisonment for financial embezzlements.
>
> Zygmund Robakiewicz, former district governor of Nadvorna, sentenced to imprisonment for embezzling large sums. Among the various crimes of which he was accused are those of embezzling 19,500 zlotys set aside for the relief of famine sufferers, 12,575 zlotys allotted to sufferers from the floods, and of retaining income-tax monies for his private purposes. It was revealed that Robakiewicz possessed the highest orders of the state—the Polonia Restituta, the Golden Cross of Merit, and the Independence Cross.

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Zenon Zaborowski, former director of the Artizan's Bank of Poznan, sentenced to imprisonment for embezzlement.

Probably the most serious of all problems with which Poland is faced is that of its exceptionally large percentage of minorities. It has been estimated that Jews, White Russians and Ukrainians form one-third of the population. Of these minorities, it is the 6,500,000 Ukrainians in Eastern Galicia, Volhynia and Polissia who are numerically and politically the most important. (This figure is from Ukrainian ecclesiastical statistics. The official Polish figure is much lower, but based on arbitrary nomenclature.)

These people, who are ethnographically and culturally akin to the 35,000,000 Ukrainians under the Soviet, and the Ukrainians of Czechoslovakia and Rumania, are strongly, and increasingly, conscious of their nationality. Many of them, knowing the strength of the drive for independence in Soviet Ukraine, look to the reestablishment of the Ukrainian Sovereign Republic across the frontier, for then they would rise from the status of a submerged minority to that of a first-class factor in European politics.

Criticizing the policy of the Endeks (extreme Polish nationalists) toward the minorities, a writer in the Polish organ, *Dziennik Ludowy*, states:

> According to official figures of the 1931 census, we have in Poland 69 percent of Polish nationality and 31 percent of non-Polish, speaking different languages and belonging to different races. This means approximately 10,000,000 people. What is the Polish National party to do with that population? Logically, on Nationalist principles, they should be expelled from the country. But with their territory or without?

He goes on to instance the voivodships of Volhynia and Stanislawow, where there are an overwhelming preponderance of Ukrainians:

> The Nationalist policy of expelling Ukrainians together with their possessions would mean nothing less than a new partitioning of Poland—an obvious contradiction of Nationalist Imperialist aims as propounded by the extreme Right Wing. On the other hand, were the millions of Ukrainians to quit Poland without their land there would arise the modest question of where they should go.

Not the least of the causes making for Ukrainian bitterness is that of their Latinization—which means Polonization—by the authorities, in violation, not only of the Minorities Treaties, but of Catholic principles. There is overwhelming evidence that this policy has been pursued consistently, and throughout all Ukrainian territories.

It is scandalous, but true, that Polish Catholics have been all too willing to lend themselves to the political purposes of the Polish state. In effect, missions are established, to "convert" Ukrainian Catholics. For example, in the purely Ukrainian voivodship of Stanislawow, in Eastern Poland, the government has built, of recent years, ten Latin churches, and there are eighteen more under construction. Landlords bring pressure to bear upon their tenants to embrace the Latin Rite, employers give their employees to understand that refusal to turn Latin means dismissal from work, and by many other expedients the people are induced to desert their ancestral Byzantine Rite.

For years Ukrainian clergy have been insulted and assaulted without redress, Ukrainian devotional books have been confiscated, Ukrainian soldiers have been prevented from attending their own Byzantine church, and there have been cases of Polish teachers who have forbidden their Ukrainian pupils to use the age-old Ukrainian greeting, "Slava Isusu Chrystu" (Glory be to Jesus Christ), substituting a Polish greeting devoid of spiritual significance. The attitude of Polish ecclesiastics seems clear from an interview with Monsignor Twardowski, Latin Archbishop of the Ukrainian territories, published in *Narod Polski* last December. The Archbishop said:

> The results of the efforts of the Roman Catholic Church [in Malopolska or "Little Poland"] have been so gigantic that I look up with heartfelt thankfulness to the Almighty Father for the blessing that He has bestowed upon us priests and Polish communities.
>
> With the greatest admiration am I following the efforts made by our citizens . . . to raise the money to build Catholic fortresses of faith and Polish nationality. Such fortresses have in the past fifteen years grown in number to more than 300.

It should be stressed that the territory in question is peopled almost entirely by devout Ukrainians, in union with Rome.

Both Poles and Ukrainians are seriously concerned at the government's inability to deal, firmly and constructively, with the minorities problem, and it is realized that a change of policy is necessary, not only to those minorities, but to the state itself.

On January 4 and 5 there was held at Lemberg (Lwow) a Congress of the Ukrainian National Democratic Union (UNDO). This organization represents the vast bulk of Ukrainians in Poland, whose viewpoint was expressed in the following demands:

> (1) Ukrainian territories in Poland should receive territorial autonomy with their own Diet, government, and territorial army. This demand is based on the unquestionable fact that over 6,000,000 Ukrainians, who inhabit in a compact mass almost one-quarter of the Polish State, in the East, have an elementary right to self-determination on their ancestral soil, and the right of free development.

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(2) The self-government system should be such that the inhabitants should have direct influence on governmental institutions and their activities.

(3) A change of the system of election to the Seym and Senate should be made so that electors should have direct and decisive influence as to choice of candidates.

(4) The colonization of land by colonists brought in from the West should be stopped and the land should be allowed to go to the local population who are landless, or insufficiently landed. [This article refers to the colonization of Ukrainian lands chiefly by Polish ex-service men, a measure that has resulted in increased impoverishment among the land-hungry Ukrainians, and led to extreme bitterness against the Poles.]

(5) An Ukrainian University should be established at Lwow, and elementary and secondary schools of all types should be established in the Ukrainian territory, according to the population's needs.

These demands form the basis of Ukrainian policy, and they are fully in accord with the undertaking of the Polish government at Versailles, in 1919, in regard to minorities in general, and that government's further commitments at the Conference of Ambassadors in 1923, in regard to Ukrainians in particular. The former treaty guaranteed:

> Complete protection of life and liberty to all inhabitants of Poland, without distinction of birth, nationality, language, race or religion.

In the latter treaty the two relevent paragraphs ran as follows:

> Whereas it is recognized by Poland that as far as the Eastern part of Galicia is concerned the ethnographic conditions necessitate an autonomous régime.
>
> Whereas the treaty concluded between the principal Allied and Associated Powers and Poland, on June 28, 1919, provided for all the territories placed under the sovereignty of Poland, special guarantees in favor of the minorities either of race, language or religion.

The Ukrainian case is that the Poles have failed to honor these pledges, in spite of repeated representations from various powers, and that the increase of misery and dissatisfaction among Ukrainians is one of the main causes of Polish instability. Ukrainians have never ceased to urge that it is to the advantage of Poland; of Europe, that the question should be tackled boldly and with generosity.

In December, the leader of the Ukrainian Parliamentary Representation, Mr. V. Mudry, made a memorable speech before the Seym, in the course of which he said:

> . . . The situation is very bad indeed. . . . The whole of Europe seems to be rumbling and quaking like a volcano, and it seems only a matter of the *day and hour when that volcano will erupt.* Out of the resultant cataclysm we have the right to draw as many advantages as possible for ourselves, for we have much to gain and little to lose. But Poland as a state will have much to lose if a war overtakes her in such a condition as she now is in—a land torn by conflicting interests, and unsettled questions, among which is that of the Ukrainians.

Events of first-rate importance succeed each other with startling swiftness in the arena of Central and Eastern Europe. Black must be injustices suffered by Ukrainians in Poland, since they regard the—maybe—suicidal catastrophe of an international war as a means of possible deliverance.

There are Poles who see the urgent necessity of reconciliation with their minorities, if Poland is to be consolidated against such an eventuality. May their counsels be heeded today—while the opportunity still exists.

The Eucharistic Congress

Now come ye on, ye grateful throngs of nations,
Come with unending files of marching men,
Ranked in the vaster armament of peace,
And come again
With children's snowy prayers, with maiden's singing,
Over the oceans and the continents bringing
New praise, new thanks, new glory without cease,
Unto the Eucharistic sacrifice,
The hidden God Who on our altar lies.

Come, on the tremulous waters of the ocean,
Come from the nether hemispheres of earth,
Where sunrise hath its birth,
Come on the astonished air,
Unused the mortal forms of men to bear,
Come on the duteous, serviceable land,
The fertile soil, proud to have sprouted sweet,
With glad, most honored wheat,
That oft hath died and risen, to complete
The bread—that is no more—
Beneath whose cloaking form, Emmanuel we adore!

Come, nations from the corners of the world,
Ye pale and sun-haired children of the north,
From your aspiring cities hurry forth!
Ye swarthy tribes, whom ancient suns have browned,
Approach this holy ground!
Bronzed aborigines, come on
To grace this happy dawn!
From the mysterious east,
Whence came this heavenly Feast,
Pour forth, ye peaceful legions, without end,
To hail and praise your Brother and your Friend.

I hear the multitudinous clamor of their voices,
Lifted in myriad hymns of faith and praise,
The echoing world beneath their tread rejoices;
Delighted flowers blossom in their ways:
From the four winds, from every clime and coast,
They throng, to hail the Eucharistic Host!

EDWARD F. GARESCHÉ.

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Looking Backward—and Forward

By LOUIS J. A. MERCIER

THE REORGANIZATION of THE COMMONWEAL cannot but mark a date in the thought of those who welcomed its coming fourteen years ago. In 1924 we were struggling to adjust our pre-war mentalities to the demands of a new age. Those of us who were born in Europe were becoming conscious that we had been bred to be strongly nationalistic. The last quarter of the nineteenth century had seen the ascendant racial consciousness of Germany and the slow rise to patriotic pride of Italy, both but recently unified. France and England could not help but feel that those new nations were growing threats, especially the first, with its dream of a Mittel-Europa under its control, and its possible march to the East. Nor could they be blamed for seeking to establish a balance of power through links with Russia, though it still lagged centuries behind in social evolution.

The resulting equilibrium we all knew was at best precarious, and no one was surprised when an incident toppled the unnatural structure. No one in 1914, however, could guess what a world war would mean, and, in 1924, we were still dazed by the revelation. Too few in Europe were able to adjust themselves to the pressing need of dropping too narrowly national points of view to become Europeans, and too few in America could see that if the United States seized the opportunity of assuming the international leadership which was theirs for the taking, a new day in world-relations might dawn through a rational adjustment of concerns which could not but be common, since scientific progress was fast obliterating distance.

We were then destined to go through one slow realization after another. Europe had been toying with naturalism, as we had in a less degree, for over a hundred years. But whereas our institutions were established when faith in a God from Whom could spring inalienable rights was still strong, Europe, too generally, deluded itself with the belief that man's rights could be said to come from himself and still be preserved. On the contrary, if they came from himself, there was no further possible source of rights above himself or his government; and once man had delegated these rights, the way was paved first for the tyranny of majorities, then of dictatorships. Moreover, naturalism could not easily remain short of avowed and militant atheism. The consequence was that the post-war era not only lost its chance to reunite Europe, but was to see the rise of God-hating or narrowly racial dictators.

Finally, if the nineteenth century boasted of being heir to eighteenth-century revolutions, it became clear that, in Europe, those revolutions had meant at best the displacement of an aristocracy of birth by the middle class; and the boasted liberalism of this middle class worked for the free play of industrial competition without sufficient thought being given to the common good, or the rights of all to a living wage and to a share in the excess-profits made possible by scientific discoveries. Hence even an atheistic dictatorship could at least boast of working for more social justice than had been achieved under a theistic or under a naturalistic liberal régime. Thus the cross-currents of accumulated rights and wrongs and contrary doctrines were to break upon us all and tear at our smugness of thought.

No wonder that, under those circumstances, we were often to feel thankful for the existence in these United States of a review which called upon non-Catholics and Catholics to unite above political parties, to comment on the trends in all secular fields from the one binding point of view that "religion is at once the foundation and the only sure guarantee of the highest forms of civilization and culture." Such a free forum, in the better sense of freedom, could not of course displace official church-papers or those staffed by highly trained religious. With their resources of corporate wisdom such organs must remain the citadels of Catholic thought. But this was a new age, one in which the laity had been called to assert itself.

What was wanted was a layman's magazine, to be written primarily by laymen grounded in Catholic philosophy and theology, if possible, but also by others at least in sympathy with the background of traditional civilization, with its humanistic urbanity and its felt need of religion. Such men might not be free from making mistakes, but, at least, they could always be counted upon to stand corrected if, in their eagerness to build roads into new areas of action, they ran the danger of losing their way. For between general principles and their application there must often be many tentative approaches.

May it not be permissible to say that, primarily thanks to its editor-in-chief, THE COMMONWEAL proved equal to its special task? It carried Catholic thought into circles where a more official approach could not so easily get a hearing. It created a spirit of its own in every type of discussion; and though it cannot be credited with having achieved it alone, there is no doubt that

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the fourteen years of its existence coincide with the development in the United States of the mood of conference and of cooperation among men of many faiths and convictions.

They coincide with much else, in fact with an era that has seen more dramatic world-stirring events than were ever crowded into a like period, if only because, through our suddenly astounding facilities of communication, almost any event of national importance had, for the first time in history, instantaneous world-wide repercussions.

This too should be carefully noted. History constantly records ascendancies and declines. Barbaric disruptions called for feudalism, the limited horizons of feudalism for national unities. The resulting comparative security within distinct areas brought the possibility of the accumulation of capital; capital the possibility of towns beside the monasteries, of courts, of universities, and, finally, of the secularization of culture. The secularization of culture challenged the Christian ethos which had united Europe, after the collapse of the Roman Empire had left the Christian Church standing alone on imperial ruins as a principle of moral order. Secular culture found its antecedents in Greece and Rome, which was well, since some sound values were to be found there, but which was also to prove fatal, since, allied with these values, lurked a deep ignorance of the supernaturalized nature of man. The record is there to prove that a divided Christendom could not adequately safeguard the integral message of great joy wherever a guaranteed magisterium was denied. From this magisterium to deism, from deism to pantheism, from pantheism to militant atheism, such has been the devolution. The point is that it culminated only in our own day. Hence the bewilderment of the present leaders of secular thought.

And yet, the first number of the new COMMONWEAL, which suggests these reflections, is a witness that Catholics in the United States, at least, need not court pessimism. Thirty, twenty, even fifteen years ago there could not have been, for instance, in a Catholic review, such advertisements of truly notable books as appeared in that number, recalling as they did literally hundreds of vital titles which have kept on appearing these last few years with whole movements behind them: the liturgical, carrying the doctrine of the Mystical Body; the National Catholic Welfare Conference's vigilant concern that calumnies shall not stand unchallenged and misunderstandings undispelled; the patient building-up of the organizations necessary to insure the highest scholarship within our universities and its diffusion without; the vigorous renaissance of neo-scholasticism; the maturing of a Christian sociology out of the encyclicals; the Catholic youth movement now so widely rooted; the founding of Catholic book shops; the Christian theatre movement, with startling successes even on Broadway and its radiating influence for decency.

The progress made is the more startling when we reflect that, before the war, outside of the American Catholic Educational Association, the groups behind all these activities had not yet been organized; that, for instance, the American Catholic Historical Association is only eighteen years old, and the now widely influential American Catholic Philosophical Association only thirteen. How significant that this association could stage, as it did last year, a joint meeting with non-Catholic philosophers. How interesting, too, that today one of the youngest college presidents in the United States, the head of one of the greatest of our non-Catholic universities, thinks in terms of Saint Thomas, and chides even Catholic educational institutions for not being sufficiently true to their humanistic tradition. Nor are there wanting other non-Catholic critics who are also ready to recognize that salvation in all domains is to be sought in the Christian humanistic tradition.

Only the older among us can thoroughly appreciate all that this means, because only they can know how far we were from such achievements in the first years of the century. Witness, for instance, the work of Agnes Repplier and of Dr. James J. Walsh, which was represented in the first number of the new COMMONWEAL. How the few students in our then few Catholic colleges felt grateful to them and to a Maurice Francis Egan, a Bishop Spalding, and a Conde Pallen for the promise that, some day, there would be such a thing as an American Catholic literature.

Evidently, only the careful charting of the progress made since 1900 can make us visualize the present in the proper perspective and make us realize that, in these very days of frequent misgivings, the stage is being cleared for a most promising future. Lights may have gone out all over Europe in 1914, but it was best that some be extinguished in every country. Better lights have flared up since, even if alongside of some smoky torches. At least we are definitely through with special privileges on the basis of birth, and we are fast getting through with the feeling that wealth had the right in turn to insure privilege to some and to deny to others even a decent living.

The alternatives in religious allegiances, and the possibility of cooperation between those who hold them, have also become more clear. Catholics are more generally aware that, according to the Church's own doctrine, those not nominally of their faith may nevertheless be of the fold, and that no one can enter it formally against his own conscience. Protestants, on the other hand, now hold very few of the original tenets which separated them from the Mother Church and can only be more and more impressed by the contrast

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between their own divisions and its abiding unity; while Jews, destined to be the first victims of neo-pagan cults based on racial differences, look with hope toward the Church whose founders left the Synagogue to convert the whole gentile world. In short, those who recognize God as the ultimate end of man, and the need of grace for righteousness, may now feel that they can unite to help secure the common good, leaving to each one the responsibility of working out, in the light of his own conscience and of God's grace, the implications involved in that basic faith.

But there are many other signs of progress toward common understandings. Intolerance has receded in England, and naturalism in France. It is receding with us today. Scientists have again grown humble, in many instances even genuinely religious, and religious thinkers have fully realized that science, being but the reading of the thought of God in creation, is really the vestibule of a *summa theologica*.

There are then two attitudes open to us. One of dismay at the consequences of our having reached the culmination of the devolution from the faith of the Christian centuries to the present militancy of atheism and neo-paganism in various countries and in some influential circles of our own. No one, of course, can deny that the danger is far-reaching, and that all those who believe with THE COMMONWEAL that "religion is at once the foundation and the only sure guarantee of the highest form of civilization and culture" should coordinate their efforts for the more general practical application of their principles. But another attitude than that of discouragement nevertheless remains open. Every age is too apt to disparage the present in favor of the past.

A closer study of history suffices to show that there must always be battling for truth and decency. Saint Thomas had to refute pantheism and naturalism much as we have to. A great deal of the secular literature of the Middle Ages was no more edifying than much of our own. Christian kings and emperors ever tried to make the Church subservient to their own desires. Christian morality was often flaunted by them and their aristocracies no less than it is today by our immoralists. Nor should we forget the periods when the Church itself was torn by schism and sullied by unworthy representatives. Indeed we might well dwell on this last point. The status of the Papacy is the pulse of modern history, and the Papacy was never more independent or glorious than today, nor since the Middle Ages more steadily growing in influence in England, France and the United States than it has been since Leo XIII.

The conclusion may then well be that, in spite of the aftermath of the World War, it would be difficult to pick out a century to which we should prefer to return. In fact, the very menaces of our day are working in our favor. The threat of atheistic communism, bound to recede as the shallowness of its tenets and its inhuman inplications continue to be revealed, is at least helping us to become fully conscious of the need to readjust our economic order. The dictatorships too are not a total loss, for, in giving us the caricature of patriotism and of race-pride, they are leading us to become more aware of our own provincialisms. Even our depressions have been useful, since they have at least turned us away from our confident worship of the golden calf.

In numberless ways, then, we are wiser than when THE COMMONWEAL was founded. We are in fact nearer than we have ever been to the possibility of developing Christian democracies. If all those, to begin with, in the United States, France and England, who understand what is needed to establish such an order, get in touch with one another and learn to profit by their varied experiences, that order may become an actuality much sooner than we think, at those times when we forget that the Providence of God is perpetually weaving good out of the evil of man's making.

He Knew Kipling

By CHARLES DUTTON

MY FRIEND, Jack Devine, was an actor. An old trouper in fact. He has played stock in almost every city in America. His own vaudeville team played England for a year. He could tell stories of the famous men and women of the stage for hours at a time. Had known them all. Yet here was a new one:

"You know, all this stuff in the papers about the Constitution reminds me of what my friend Kip used to ask us years ago. He would say: 'Where does your Supreme Court get the power to change the law? I have read your Constitution many times and cannot see it gives them that right.'"

"Kip?" I asked.

"Rudyard Kipling. You know—the writer."

"You knew Kipling?"

"Sure. Saw him every day for three years. Drank Scotch with him. I was running an amusement park in Brattleboro, Vermont, while he was there. He lived about five miles out of town on a farm he had purchased from his mother-in-law.

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"I never shall forget the first time I saw him. Every day he would ride his bicycle down to town to get the mail. He was getting a lot of mail at the time. His stuff was selling well. He wore short trousers, the first we had seen, and golf stockings; he was always smoking a pipe.

"Just outside the town was a long hill." The recollection made him grin. "Kipling had a habit of putting his feet up and coasting down the hill right into town. This day, as he came along, a load of hay turned into the village street and blocked it."

He broke off the narrative to inquire, "Ever hear of Doctor Conland?"

I shook my head.

"You would have liked him. He was our leading doctor. He became Kipling's closest friend in Brattleboro. It was because of Conland that 'Captains Courageous' came to be written. They met for the first time when Kipling ran into the load of hay directly in front of the doctor's house.

"You see, the doctor and I happened to be out on his front lawn. We saw Kipling, feet up, come around the corner. He hit that load of hay smack in the middle. Off he went into the dust. When we reached him he was picking himself up and his language was what you might call strong. The bicycle was a wreck. He, however, was unhurt. That was the start of his great friendship with Dr. Conland. After that there was hardly a day but that the two met. We had a meeting place, a few of us—the office of the new Democratic paper. You see, Kipling was a Democrat."

"He was not an American citizen," I protested. "How could he have been a Democrat? He was an imperialist. England's great imperialist."

"Well, he was a Democrat in America. Told us so. Said that between the two parties that was the one he would choose. Maybe the fact Conland was a Democrat had something to do with it. There were not many Democrats in Vermont then—or now, for that matter."

"How did the people of Brattleboro like him?" I asked.

"Well, you know Vermont. He was English. A stranger. At first there was some feeling. Shortly after he came to Vermont he wrote a story. I think it was called 'Main Street, Vermont.' The London *Times* published it, a copy was sent to Brattleboro and was much passed around. The busybodies had no use for him. Called him 'that stuck-up Englishman.' But the regular fellows, after he got in with Conland, liked him. Do you know how he happened to come to Brattleboro?"

I had heard something of the story.

"Well, when I was a boy, Judge Balestier was the Federal Circuit Judge. His office was Rochester, New York; his circuit included Vermont. He lived in Brattleboro. Started to buy up farms and combine them. When he died he was a wealthy man. The Judge had a son, Wolcott. He met Kipling in London. They wrote a book together. Wolcott was always talking about Vermont. He became seriously ill. Kipling sent word to his family that someone should come to England at once. Mrs. Balestier could not go. She sent her daughter, Caroline. In London she met Kipling. Her brother died. Kipling and Caroline fell in love with each other. She returned to Vermont; a bit later he followed her and they were married.

"He was making money then, a good deal of it. He purchased a fairly large home from his mother-in-law's estate, built a house. Every day he used to ride his bicycle into town. After he became acquainted with the doctor they would meet around noon at the newspaper office. There would be about six of us there."

He grinned. "Politics were much in the air, then as now. We had a number of town meetings where the village affairs and those of the state were scrapped out. Kipling went to them. Took a front seat. Once in a while he would make a note in a little note-book he always carried. Kipling listened far more than he spoke. But he was much interested in our Constitution. He told us a growing nation might some day discover it could not be governed by an ancient document. He read a great deal of history. And American newspapers. We always had the idea he would have become an American citizen, if the trouble had not come. He told us several times he was thinking of it. Then came the quarrel with his brother-in-law. He was angry and returned to England. But for that, I am certain he would have taken out papers for citizenship.

"I can still see him at the baseball games. I was running a semi-professional team at the time. It was a good team; we used to draw over a thousand people. Three games a week. Played Sundays, because the baseball park was outside the town limits, so the sheriff did not bother us. Kipling took in every game. At first, he sat in the grandstand. Then he moved down to the players' bench and sat there through every game. He never missed one of them. Said baseball beat cricket. After the game we would adjourn to the newspaper office and have a drink. He drank Scotch. I don't recall ever seeing him drink anything else."

"You said it was because of the doctor that he wrote 'Captains Courageous'?" I asked.

"Yes. You see, the doctor, as a boy, was brought up in Boston. Was an orphan. A Grand Banks fishing captain — a Portuguese — took a fancy to him, and the doctor as a boy had fished off the Banks. Later he went to medical school, came to Brattleboro to practise. I have heard him telling his experiences on the fishing grounds to Kipling. Then Kip had a guest from England.

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Another writer, William Clark Russell. He wrote sea stories. I always thought it was his visit that caused Kipling to take the fishing trip."

"What trip?" I asked.

"To the Banks in a Gloucester fishing boat. Conland, Russell, Kipling, myself and a couple of others were in an argument. It ended in the doctor proposing that he, Russell and Kipling take a trip to the Banks. In the end it was so agreed. The doctor took them to Boston, where he had fixed it up with the captain of a fishing boat. Russell gave one look at the small boat and decided he did not care to go. But the doctor and Kipling took the trip. That's how he got the color for the book. He dedicated it to the doctor.

"He liked Vermont. He became a member of the local Vermont Wheeling Club. Even joined the local Professional and Business Club. There are still a few in town who recall playing poker with him. Not often, but he tried it. And at every play that came to town—there were a good many pretty awful ones during the winter—there was Kipling in a seat close to the front.

"Of course, since she had been born and brought up in Brattleboro, everyone knew and liked his wife. It was she who told about the telephone. She wanted one. Kipling did not. He would not use a typewriter either. He may have done so in later years, but he told us the 'damned thing drove him crazy.' There were a great many arguments about a telephone. He was against it. It would 'bother him.' One day he told us at the office in detail what he thought about telephones. But his wife kept right on wanting one."

"What happened?" I asked.

"Oh, the usual thing. A telephone was installed. He told us one day, a smile on his face, and added, he 'would have to get used to it.' "

"What was the 'trouble' you mentioned?" I ventured.

"Oh, with his brother-in-law. Guess they never had cared much for each other. Kipling was becoming a famous author, making a lot of money. He used to stay in the grocery store where the post office was, to read his mail. He was reading it one day, when there came a telephone call from his brother-in-law's home for a long list of things needed for a party. The clerk took the list of things to the proprietor, saying, 'You'd think they would pay this bill before they gave a party.' It's true the bill was large, but the brother-in-law could afford to pay it. The proprietor, in response to his clerk's comment, said he wondered if it would hasten the payment if he sent the bill to Madam Balestier. Kipling overheard the conversation. Impulsively, wishing to avoid the consequent annoyance to his mother-in-law, he went to the proprietor exclaiming: 'Put it all on my bill, and I'll pay it at once.'

"Now, no harm would have been done, but the clerk told her mother, she told someone else, and so the story grew that Kipling had to pay his brother-in-law's grocery bills. You know what small towns are. Well, one day soon after this Kipling and his brother-in-law met in the middle of the road. The brother-in-law leaped from his horse shouting, 'You ——— Englishman, I paid my bills long before you ever came over here, and can do it now.' There were more names. Kipling laid his bicycle along the side of the road, and hit good and hard. Then he picked up a stone. He was not nearly as large a man as his brother-in-law.

"There was a farmer working in the field. Hearing the quarrel, he came to lean over the fence. When he saw Kipling pick up the stone he said quietly, 'Better drop that stone, Kip.' It was good advice, as Kipling realized. He dropped it, got on his bicycle and rode away. Came into town as usual, said not a word about the fight."

Jack shook his head. "But the brother-in-law went over to Putney to a Justice of the Peace. There he swore that his English brother-in-law had assaulted him with intent to kill. So the sheriff was sent out to arrest him. He was held at the office of the Justice, who would not allow Kipling to put up his own bail, until the doctor and other friends put up the money.

"When the case came to trial, everybody was present. Kipling was fined a trifling sum; the brother-in-law was bound over to keep the peace. Kipling appealed the case, but nothing came of it.

"Perhaps just to get away from it all, he started out on a lecture tour. After that was concluded he became very ill with pneumonia. Almost died. When he recovered he told us he was going back to England. We were sorry. We liked him and sort of missed seeing him drop in every day."

"Did he never come back?"

"No. But for several years he kept the house open, with all the servants. Then he sold it."

"Did you ever see him again?"

"Yes, I certainly did. A few years later I was in London with an act. We played the Empire and Kipling came to see the show. Told me the act was awful. He wanted to hear all about his friends in Brattleboro. We talked a long time."

The actor sat in silence a moment, musing. Then: "If it had not been for that trouble, he would have become an American citizen. He hinted as much when I saw him in London."

Though I find it hard to accept his belief, for Kipling was far too good an Englishman—in my opinion—ever to have entertained any serious idea of giving up his citizenship, yet my actor friend insists that there was a time when he seriously contemplated taking such a step. Perhaps he is right. He ought to know. He knew him well, he saw him every day for several years.

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Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

MR. LEWIS MUMFORD'S "Call to Arms," in the May 18 number of the *New Republic*, is a curious and rather saddening example of a current epidemic of reckless appeals to passion and prejudice which afflicts so large a part of the world today, and to which even some writers who have been notable for at least the assumption of a position of intellectual reasonableness—Mr. Mumford is conspicuously such a writer—are now succumbing. Mr. Mumford is convinced, so he tells us, that this country is so acutely imperiled by the menace of fascism that only a resort to immediate forcible measures will avail to save us. "My countrymen," he tells us, "we have at best only a few moments left in which to face our situation intelligently and to carry through the necessary measures to preserve our integrity." The menace must indeed be imminent, if the time to prepare to meet it can be reckoned only in moments. During those moments, Mr. Mumford tells us, we should rush "To arms!" "Gather your strength," he bids us, "and prepare for action. Strike first against fascism; and strike hard. But strike."

As one instrument of this militant policy Mr. Mumford advocates "a comprehensive Non-Intercourse Act, which would dramatically withdraw all economic and political intercourse, to begin with, from the three militant fascist states—Germany, Italy, Japan." An immense navy should be built so that all our shipping could be protected against "fascist piracy." As for war—"fascism has already declared war," according to Mr. Mumford—but, anyhow, if our naval measures and our embargoes bring actual war, well, "it means war only as an alternative to something far more brutal and disastrous than war, submission to fascism itself." How "submission" can be "brutal," as well as "disastrous," Mr. Mumford does not explain.

But he does explain—and very kind of him to do so, to be sure—how his policy against fascism "would give the Catholic hierarchy in America an opportunity to reconsider its suicidal policy of upholding fascism, by nature hostile to Christianity as against our secular democracy, which has maintained a consistently neutral, tolerant attitude toward all religious creeds. The sooner the Church shows good-will to American democracy—even if democracy should numerically veto the Church's political views on child labor or birth control—the easier it will be for loyal Americans to maintain their precious Protestant tradition of religious tolerance."

It is really amazing that a writer whose books have been built upon so solid a foundation of historical and sociological research and study, can be swept by his passionate hatred of fascism into such a mood of reckless and unsubstantiated calumny as Mr. Mumford displays in this article. He goes so far as to say without qualification, and without advancing a shadow of proof, that in addition to organized groups of active Nazis and Fascists now in this country, "busily drilling their private armies and spreading their gospels of anti-Semitism and anti-democracy, there is a new set of fascist allies: the Roman Catholic hierarchy. While the great body of Roman Catholics are genuinely loyal to American institutions, despite their authoritarian religion, the Church has chosen to ally itself with democracy's chief enemy, fascism. The Roman Catholic priesthood has even taken over the typical fascist hoax of making war on popular government by playing up the fictitious threat of communism. This is a particularly odious trick in an overwhelmingly unbolshevik country like ours, where the Church is now threatened by nothing but its own folly."

Mr. Lewis Mumford, as a historian, ought to know that religious tolerance, in America, or anywhere else, however precious it is, is certainly not a "Protestant tradition." He also should be aware of the fact that the ideals of western civilization, now threatened by the totalitarian governments (in Russia as well as Germany, Mr. Mumford ought to note), were due mainly to Christianity, not merely "widened" by it after being inherited from Judea and Greece. At any rate, so do Christians think, and that is why the Church for two thousand years has opposed its God-given authority (the truth that makes men free) against all forms of state tyranny, or state idolatry, and that is why in the United States, as elsewhere, there is no alliance by the Church with any form of tyranny and slavery, neither communism nor Nazism nor fascism. Where the Church, because no other course is possible, must do so, she does, of course, submit to whatever power prevails, in all save betrayal of her sacred doctrine; but that is not "alliance."

It would be quite as fair for the present writer, an American Catholic, to say that Mr. Mumford's fantastic article proves that the intellectual leaders among American Jews are allied with atheistic communism, and, hence with un-American dictatorship and anti-Christian revolution, because Mr. Mumford wants us to fight fascists and Nazis in America but not to oppose communism, as it is for Mr. Mumford to make the outrageous accusations against and to attack the bishops of the Catholic Church as being the allies of Nazism and fascism. Such methods are wrong. And they are also dangerous, especially to those who use them. Mr. Mumford should follow one piece of good advice contained in his otherwise deplorable article. He should face the situation intelligently.

Communications

WHAT IS CAPITALISM?

Louisville, Ky.

TO the Editors: "What is Capitalism?" Virgil Michel's authorities for the meaning of "capitalism," confining their description of it to the present objectionable accompanying circumstances, can hardly be considered to really define it, itself. According to Pope Leo's famous encyclical he considers it in two senses: what it is in itself, viz., the right to private ownership of property; and secondly, the wrong use of the privilege, or we might say, taking advantage of the privilege,

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but ignoring the corresponding obligations. Webster's definition is substantially the same as the first mentioned above.

Father Michel decries the idea of the Christianity of "capital." But God in the Law He gave to Moses very evidently did authorize the possession of property in as much as He gave two of these commandments to protect that right. And Christ came "not to destroy the Law but to fulfil it." So why should we not speak of Christian capitalism.

And Christian or not Christian, why should we hurl our epithets at the poor nag that carries the property owner—or rather not even a nag, but a machine that cannot help but do his will?

Cooperatives are very good things and are worthy of the moral and material support of all concerned, but there is not a plan, actual or possible, that is fool proof against greed and selfishness. There is but one weapon against that—Christianity. Even the birds and beasts have leaders and whatever the title we give him, we men have to have them too, not only in government, but also in business.

The Canadian village that Longfellow has immortalized is considered an ideal earthly paradise. We cannot, at least in a moment, go back to its archaic simplicity, in fact, we need not ever discard all the conveniences, or the greater educational or cultural advantages we have, to become like its inhabitants, but we can wherever we are, make religion the hub of our wheels, which after all was what made Acadia "Arcadia."

ANASTASIA M. LAWLER.

Milwaukee, Wis.

TO the Editors: Permit me to say that there is much truth in Father Michel's article appearing in the April 29 issue entitled, "What is Capitalism?" There is a letter in the May 13 issue which states, "I take the liberty to differ with the views expressed." That is the privilege of the writer of that letter, but said letter is not convincing. There is interesting information in it, but, statements such as "There is no such condition as capitalism" and "All that is necessary is to abolish privilege" do not quite satisfy one who is looking for a definite answer. There are some reasonable definitions of capitalism in the Michel article. A positive thing cannot be explained by saying there is no such thing. Now, if the writer of that interesting letter will tell us just how to abolish privilege by which a certain few are able to assess many of the improvements and advantages of civilization, in as much as he states the less government the better, he will be rendering a real service to all who are working for better order in business.

We are convinced that our business structure has been so lop-sided that its toppling over was inevitable. The unequal distribution of wealth has become a common phrase. The unequal distribution of the profits of business is an evil well known by millions of people who have not received a just share of the profits in the proportion to the contribution they gave in honest toil.

We hear so much about the foreign dictators: What about our own? We have the industrial dictators who for many years dictated to the workers and said workers could take it or leave it. The result is a radical reaction in the ranks of labor. It gave the vicious, unbalanced element a chance to swing to the extreme left.

We need enough sane, strong men on both sides who have the ability to lay a firm foundation, measured by the Golden Rule, on which all concerned can build in a sound, constructive manner for the common weal. We need honest leaders on both sides and those who are not fit to be in authority should be relieved of their power. We need the law of civilized man; not the law of the jungle.

AL WILLIAMS.

S.O.S. FROM BISHOP CRIMONT OF ALASKA

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: The Marquette League for Catholic Indian Missions, with offices at 105 East 22nd Street, New York City, makes its appeal this spring in behalf of His Excellency Most Reverend Joseph R. Crimont, S.J., D.D., Bishop of Alaska.

The venerable Bishop, now over eighty years of age, pleads for a new convent for his native Eskimo Sisters. Bishop Crimont writes:

"They started as a little band of pious girls eager to make a life career of missionary service and personal perfection among the people of their own race. They have already done magnificent work in several missions and villages, teaching not only the Christian doctrine, but regular grade schools in English; teaching sacred hymns and patriotic songs; taking care of the sick and the poor in the villages.

"But what of their quarters? At first, the little community was huddled up, so to speak, under the damp, cold and bare roof of the church. No wonder some contracted diseases, and three of them died. Later on, to remedy the evil, Father Fox placed them in the "shack" rectory in which his predecessor and himself lived for a few years. The floor space is so narrow that the beds are superposed along the walls after the fashion of berths in the stateroom of a ship. The priest, after depriving himself for them of his poor independent shack, is living in a room built as an addition to the back of the church, and which serves as sacristy, sleeping room, study and post office, all in one.

"The most urgent and crying need is to provide quarters which will give privacy to the Sisters, and free them from intrusion by the villagers when they are at their domestic work and in training. The Sisters number eight at present. It is impossible to admit more postulants for lack of space; and a proper building with suitable accommodations should be provided for this most promising community, now, without further delay. Whence the means to meet the expenditure? That answer will be your joy and your glory, when you shall solemnly report to Our Lord and meet His Blessed Mother and Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, patroness of Alaska, when your pilgrimage on earth is over."

We would like to send saintly Bishop Crimont a substantial amount with which to build a suitable dwelling

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place for these good Sisters who are laboring so tirelessly, and under such great odds, in the hardest mission field in the world. Surely the friends of our Indian Missions will not turn a deaf ear to this urgent appeal from the far north.

Rev. Bernard A. Cullen,
Director General, The Marquette League.

WISDOM AND LEARNING

San Francisco, Calif.

TO the Editors: The letter of A. Lamb in The Commonweal of May 6 would convey the idea that to be educated is to be crafty and dishonest, and to be illiterate is to be industrious and to possess integrity. Such an idea is utterly ridiculous. If the illiterate are honest it is not because they are illiterate but in spite of it. Likewise educated people are not dishonest or crafty because they are educated but in spite of it.

One can never have too much of education, just as the ability to speak the English language correctly and with intelligence is something that every American should endeavor to attain. Any idea about education to the contrary is self-evident in its fallaciousness and most misleading.

John Hanify Moher.

Webster Groves, Mo.

TO the Editors: Apropos of your recent excellent editorial on education let me quote what the great Napoleon once said: "I would rather see the children of a village in the hands of a man who only knows his catechism but whose principles are known to me, than in the hands of a half-baked man of learning who has no foundations for his morality and no fixed ideas."

Cyril Clemens.

INDUSTRIAL JITTERS IN QUEBEC

Madison, Wis.

TO the Editors: I have just read the editorial by Harry Lorin Binsse in your issue of May 6, on "Industrial Jitters in Quebec." I have not read the articles to which Mr. Binsse refers, and they may, indeed, be biased. But I should like to call your attention to the dangerous rationalizations at the close of Mr. Binsse's own editorial, rationalizations whose danger is apparent on the face of them, quite independently of what was said in those articles.

"Anti-Semitic" riots may arise from "growing pains" rather than from "a desire to bring the country into line with the new ideologies," but if they use these ideologies, they must be identified with them in what they now are. I need not point out to you, I am sure, the fallacy of this type of genetic argument. We must be morally concerned to define such conduct and views for what they are, despite the tenderness we may feel for people who act and think thus, in view of the pressure they are under. There are "causes" even behind Nazism, causes at one time used to "justify" and exculpate the then growing evil. Race hatred is race hatred, and all the more dangerous in proportion as totally unfounded and hence of a hysterical nature.

Moreover, can the complexities of texture of the modern society be torn apart? Is it sound to direct hatred against a "non-French-speaking mercantile class"? Fascism is a spiritual attitude, and the sympathetic understanding of causes must at least go not ahead of but hand in hand with a true identification and rectifying of the evil.

Ruth Wallusten.

THE UNIVERSITY AND CHARACTER

St. Meinrad, Ind.

TO the Editors: I was very much interested in the article on education by Dr. Hutchins in the issue of April 22—interested in how un-Christian it was.

In the light of Cardinal Newman's ideas on education what Dr. Hutchins wrote was rank heresy in the field of education. Says Newman in his "Idea of a University": "Knowledge is one thing, virtue is another. . . . Philosophy, however enlightened, however profound, gives no command over the passions, no influential motives, no vivifying principles. . . . Quarry the granite rock with razors, or moor the vessel with a thread of silk; then may you hope with such keen and delicate instruments as human knowledge and human reason to contend against those giants, the passion and the pride of man."

Other points in Dr. Hutchins's article might also be questioned by scholastic philosophy. I must express my surprise that you printed such an article.

Harry Hurst.

A CATHOLIC ANTHOLOGY

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editors: I am happy to announce that the great work of Louise Imogen Guiney, "The Recusant Poets—A Catholic Anthology," which has remained in manuscript form since her death in 1920, is actually on the point of publication. This magnificent work of over 800 typewritten pages brings to light one of the most important epochs of English Catholic literature, namely, that of the Reformation period, 1535-1735. The type of research, including biographies, poems and annotations of over eighty poets, makes it a monument to American scholarship, while the material gathered together renders it indispensable for any comprehensive view of the Catholic contribution to English letters.

It is my pious hope that there are 100 or more alert Catholic schools, libraries and individuals who will wish to possess this anthology and to share in the constructive work of seeing "Recusant Poets" brought to the press. Subscribers of $10 each become honorary patrons of the first volume and will receive a subscription copy upon publication. The second volume will be issued from proceeds of the first. Sheed and Ward will publish the work.

Rev. James A. Magner,
7140 *Dorchester Avenue.*

Editorial Note: It has been called to our attention that the statement in a recent editorial paragraph that the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists actually sponsors the Crown Heights School for Catholic Workmen in Brooklyn, N. Y., is erroneous. The two are not connected.

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Points & Lines

Nazification of Austria

VERY little has appeared lately in the American press on the drastic changes being pushed through in what once was Austria. One of the changes is intimated in the *Manchester Guardian:*

> Speaking at Linz today [May 13] Field Marshal Goering said that the eight-hour day would have to be prolonged in Austria and that the period of Austrian easy-going life was definitely over.

Although it holds that this period had been over-idealized in poetry and song, the New York *Times* says editorially that comparatively pre-Nazi Austria had its points:

> In those days uniformed bullies didn't raid the coffee houses hunting down men and women for the crime of loving justice and freedom; harmless teachers and professional men were not taken into the Prater to be cuffed, kicked, humiliated and sometimes killed; artists and musicians were given better work to do than cleaning toilets and polishing boots in the barracks which the new conquerors had taken over; delicate women were not forced to their knees in the gutter while they scrubbed the sidewalks with strong lye; and no one was driven to suicide because all means of livelihood and all means of escape from the country were at once shut off from him.

Another aspect of the new conditions is cited as important in the London *Tablet,* in a quotation from the *Katholischen Kircheszeitung* of Salzburg, for a major portion of post-war Austrians were practising Catholics:

> The change in the circumstances of Austrian Catholicism is of the deepest significance. . . . Catholicism will have to depend to a large extent on itself. All its state props have suddenly given way. . . . The Christians of this country, unlike those of the German nation, have never been called upon to defend their faith, a weakness of all state and party Christianity. But now every Christian will be thrown back on himself, instead of, as hitherto, relying on his crowd instinct. If the Church in Austria is to be faithful to her mission, this mentality of personal indifference must give way to the individual heroism of every one of her members.

That those outside Austria can do much to alleviate the misery within is indicated in Archbishop Hinsley's appeal to readers of the English Catholic press for funds for the English counterpart of our Bishops' Committee for Catholic Refugees from Germany:

> From Austria and the rest of the German Reich there comes the sad tale of many of our fellow Catholics who, through no fault of their own, are suddenly deprived of their means of subsistence simply because they have some Jewish blood in their veins. They are of the race of Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother. Nor are these the only Catholics forced into unwilling exile. Many of them find themselves homeless and even destitute because of the part they have played in the public life of their country, be it in the Christian trade unions, in the Center party in Germany or in the Fatherland Front in what was Austria.

Confidence Men

FOR SOME months the press has been full of statements by gentlemen belonging to the economically conservative portion of the American public demanding a restoration of "confidence" on the part of the administration. Some of the more recent utterances on this subject—and the programs for recovery which go with them—are worth gathering together to show how the wind is blowing in these quarters. David J. Leopold, president of the Pennsylvania Bankers' Association, recently attributed the present depression to the "hostility manifested by those in high places to business profits." The New York *Times* account continues:

> Asserting that "vituperative statements are never conducive to contentment and happiness," Mr. Leopold contended that confidence could be restored only when a spirit of harmony "unmistakably manifests itself." Adjustments between the employer and the employee, he said, "should be conciliatory and peaceful," because "a house divided against itself cannot stand."

A reader of such statements begins to wonder exactly what is meant by the word "confidence." It is a word with so many meanings, overtones. One has "confidence" in God's mercy, one writes letters in "confidence," and there are "confidence" games and "confidence" men.

Ernest T. Weir, of little-steel fame, recently stated his program for the restoration of economic happiness:

> Restore confidence by an unqualified pledge to retain unaltered the principles and structure of the American systems of business and government. . . . Declare a permanent policy with regard to basic economic control. . . . Amend tax laws to eliminate punitive and crippling provisions. . . . Amend the labor laws so they shall be fair and apply with equal force to the emloyer, all employees and all labor organizations. . . . Remove threats of government competition such as the one overhanging utilities. . . . Send the Corcorans, the Cohens and their kind back where they came from. Cease attacks on business. Provide a leadership under which all the people can unite. . . . Make this program clear and then stick to it.

Again a reader feels that all this raises questions bristling to be answered. What is the "American" system of business? Unrestrained profits, stock-jobbing, treating labor as an open-market commodity? And again what is "confidence"?

And Mr. Charles R. Hook, president of the National Association of Manufacturers (and of the American Rolling Mill Company) has a program (quoted from the New York *Herald Tribune*):

> Constructive steps by the government to create confidence in private enterprise . . . declaration by the federal government that it will not compete with private utilities . . . cooperation between all groups to increase national income . . . prompt solution of the underlying railroad problem . . . revision of the Wagner Act to make it a workable instrument for curtailing labor disputes . . . adequate definition of specific purpose in the appropriating of further national funds for relief purposes, relief funds to be administered by local agencies . . . and avoidance of new federal reform legislation that "will result in a fresh period of uncertainty."

What is this "confidence," anyhow? Perhaps it means simply a request that the all-powerful federal government promise us a return to the happy days of the twenties, that it promise us industrial peace when there is no peace, that it promise a free hand to a system of business which in 1929 did so magnificent a job of swallowing itself. A simple reader might be pardoned if the awful thought assails him that those who most need to strive to regain his own confidence are certain of the more vociferous industrialists and finance capitalists themselves.

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The Stage and Screen

The Prize Plays

THE TWO prize plays for the season of 1937-1938 have now been announced, the award of the Pulitzer Committee going to Thornton Wilder's "Our Town," that of the Critics' Circle to John Steinbeck's "Mice and Men." In a non-totalitarian civilization unanimity is impossible, but at least neither choice will arouse widespread condemnation. I myself, had I had a voice, would have probably voted for T. S. Eliot's "Murder in the Cathedral." This, even though it had been given before by the WPA, is by far the most original and distinguished play presented this season, and though its author has recently become a British subject he is American by birth and education. Yet apart from Mr. Eliot's play I feel the two committees chose the two next best works.

"Our Town" is an exceedingly well-written play, and gives the atmosphere of a small New England town with keen and sympathetic fidelity. Its weakness lies in its stunt quality, and its lack of anything but an atmospheric unity. The mere fact that it is given without scenery, and that the action is largely in pantomime, does not mean in itself that it is truly original or an important contribution to dramatic art. On the contrary, some of the pantomime is distinctly annoying as it merely detracts attention from the ideas and the dialogue. Moreover, the last act, with the dead sitting round on chairs to express the idea that death isn't really so important after all, seems to me distinctly banal, a very Unitarian sort of heaven. It makes death as New England and prosaic as the life it pictures. But the dialogue, and especially the monologues, are delicately and truly written, and the characters in the first two acts justly and delicately conceived.

The Critics' award goes to an altogether different type of play. "Mice and Men" is a tragedy, but despite the fact that it deals with the flotsam and jetsam of life, and that there are passages offensive to good taste, it is informed with a sense of pity and a suppressed poetry of feeling. Mr. Steinbeck, unlike his brother proletarian writers, is not a materialist; it might even be asserted that he is not a realist. He has an acute feeling of the spiritual quality in the submerged, and he writes dialogue which while realistic is often poetic. He has moreover an unusual power of making his characters one with their surroundings, of permeating them with the life of nature. In his depiction of life in flux, without bearings, and without foundation, he expresses as no other writer the tragic side of the America created by an industrial civilization. His people have fled the city, and yet have found no rest or haven in their rural stopping places. They are not lovely, and they are appallingly dumb, but despite their impotence they are blindly groping toward the light. Some have even a nobility, though a nobility twisted and inhibited. They suffer, not only in their bodies but in their souls. It is this realization that a human being has a soul which raises Mr. Steinbeck head and shoulders as a thinker and an artist above the herd who have stemmed from Hemingway.

In addition to giving its accolade to "Mice and Men" as the best American play the Critics' Circle unanimously voted Paul Vincent Carroll's "Shadow and Substance" the best foreign play. To this award there will surely be no objection anywhere. GRENVILLE VERNON.

Doctors—In Rhythm and in Cuba

BEATRICE LILLIE is Beatrice Lillie is Beatrice Lillie. (Thanks, Miss Stein.) That is all ye know and all ye need to know. (Thanks, Mr. Keats.) In other words, Beatrice Lillie is at her best in Paramount's new "Dr. Rhythm"; and Beatrice Lillie at her best is tops. She has a way all of her own of lifting her finger, kicking back her train, burlesquing a song, accenting the wrong word—"*If* you know what I mean, and I *think* you know what I mean"—that rolls her audience in the aisles.

It is too bad, however, that Paramount has gathered such a splendid cast for "Dr. Rhythm"—Bing Crosby, Mary Carlisle, Laura Hope Crews, Andy Devine, Sterling Holloway—and then given them nothing to do. The plot, so thin that it is almost pointless, doesn't give these people a chance. But the picture is worth seeing for Mr. Crosby's casual and humorous crooning of a couple of tuneful numbers with clever lyrics, and for Miss Lillie's inimitable romping, especially in her often repeated "Rhythm" number and that riot concerning two dozen double damask dinner napkins.

The doctors in "Yellow Jack," a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer picture, based on the play by Sidney Howard in collaboration with Paul de Kruif, are concerned with the causes of yellow fever in Cuba after the Spanish-American War. The importance of their excellent research and discoveries under the leadership of Walter Reed cannot be overestimated, for, without them, many more people would have died and the Panama Canal could never have been completed. The main interest in this picture version, however, centers around the five young soldiers who volunteered to be the human guinea pigs in that experiment which proved the mosquito to be the carrier of the dread disease.

Robert Montgomery gives an excellent performance as Sergeant O'Hara with his Irish brogue and smartalecky-but-sincere-beneath-it-all attitude toward the doctors, soldiering, life and death. And Lewis Stone, Henry Hull, Charles Coburn, Buddy Ebsen, William Henry and Sam Levene are convincing in their portrayals of the doctors and the soldiers. Virginia Bruce, as the nurse, is the love interest, and fortunately that element is not overemphasized. In fact the whole picture is done with careful restraint and without fanfare and mock heroics. For that reason it is all the more tense and exciting when the five young men offer themselves for the experiment—three to languish in the clothes and surroundings of men who have died from yellow fever, and two to allow themselves to be bitten by the carrier mosquitoes. Fictitious names are used in the picture, but a final note of realism is added at the end when the real names of the men, whose nobility made history, are submitted with the notice, " 'Yellow Jack' celebrates what these men did, rather than who they were." PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Books of the Day

Biggest "Middletown"

The Big City, by Robert Sinclair. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1938. $3.00.

"THE BIG CITY" has as sub-title "A Human Study of London"—a sub-title which fits the book happily. The tone is quite objective throughout, and its author asks us to judge his work upon the facts, which are intelligently selected and arranged for the reader, rather than by what he himself thinks. Yet his indignation over the evils he finds is conveyed in every sentence—somehow without damaging the objective character of what he does. This personal approach justifies calling "The Big City" a "human" study, and gives it a distinctly literary quality. The pleasure and value in the book are increased by Robert Sinclair's excellent use of language. Each new demand on the reader's attention is worded vividly and freshly.

There is another element which contributes to the volume's objective value. One is not conscious at any point that the writer has some new philosophy to vindicate through what he exposes. He proposes no theory nor any immediate remedy as a corrective to the evils discussed. Each situation he examines is measured by some criterion commonly accepted by both Londoners and provincials, as to what their big city should live up to in that respect. Whether Robert Sinclair is a Liberal, a Marxist, a Thomist, or of some other ideological persuasion, is difficult to discover from the pages of his book. He comes nearest to a program when he suggests that the modern metropolis must be broken up into pieces of human size if it is to be managed by human intelligence.

Substantially the same evils that he finds in London can be found (although to a lesser degree perhaps) in New York and in continental metropolises. Hence the book has an international application and value. Moreover, it must be taken as having serious scientific value, despite the popular style in which it is presented. Over six hundred documents relating to London life are listed as references. The related sources not listed, which the author must have examined and sifted, are probably far in excess of this. He has compiled all these results so that city dwellers may see clearly in figures the inhuman aspects of urban life. The same records are available to all who may wish to seek them out in their pigeon-holes and to verify what Mr. Sinclair has laid before us. His attitude is not that of a debunker: rather it reveals scornful indignation over such a tremendous hoodwinking of men. Yet the very merit of the book—its lack of any philosophy—leads to confusion. This lack of a unifying approach tends to multiply the number of paradoxes which are offered to the reader beyond the point at which the understanding can assent with real conviction.

The "Big City" is built up upon the investigation of the two following questions: (1) "Are the leadership and influence of London a sham, deceiving both the Londoner and the rest of England?" (2) "How happy are the forgotten race of Londoners, whose place is so near the sun, that they, as individuals, are not seen for the dazzle?"

The author's conclusions are presented in such sentences as these: "The lie about London's progressive and enlightened character is a public menace . . . because man is predisposed to believe good false news rather than bad true news. The record of London is a heart-rending record of incompetence and maladministration. . . . London is a hotbed of chronic disease. Londoners are so ignorant, so poor and so mismanaged that they incur preventable pain and postponable death. The highly unfit population of London lives in unhealthy and often unsanitary homes. The prosperity of London is a myth. Some Londoners are still certified as dying each year of starvation. Many Londoners are more overcrowded, and in worse houses, than the people of despised industrial cities." One in every three Londoners dies in the poor house. Ninety thousand future suicides are walking the streets of London. In short, the Londoner has lost the peace, the freedom and the joy of life. That he seems to be unaware of it only indicates the depth and ignorance of the servitude.

JOSEPH MCDONALD.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Georgian Adventure: The Autobiography of Douglas Jerrold. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.50.

TO MOST Americans Douglas Jerrold is known only as editor of the *English Review* in the days when that journal, almost alone in England, was pointing out the follies of a Liberalism which, lit by a pink glow from Moscow, was turning steadily toward state capitalism. By a few he is recognized as one of the half-dozen brilliant minds in England who have not confused democracy with a movement toward the left; as soldier, civil servant, and book publisher; and as the Catholic who arranged Franco's flight from the Canaries to Morocco at the start of the Spanish Civil War. In publishing his autobiography while still in his forties he makes no pretense of personal distinction: what interests both author and reader is that he was born in an age when democracy and Liberalism were synonymous, but has seen the two draw ever further apart.

Jerrold, who seeks genuine freedom beneath the democratic phrase, is deeply impressed by the gradual destruction of the individual by the political state, whether parliamentary or totalitarian. Liberalism began, in his youth, with a fatal weakness at its heart: "That freedom, freely given, would be wisely used was the fundamental axiom. . . . How the liberal doctrine of natural wisdom could be harmonized with the Christian doctrine of original sin was not a problem. . . ." The World War, which he passed at Gallipoli and in France, was conclusive evidence of growing anti-individual tendencies: he is brilliant in his circumstantial condemnation of the British staff-ridden army. ("Minds on the spot must be allowed to work if lives are not to be needlessly thrown away. . . . A readiness to die yourself is no adequate substitute for a resolute determination to see that your men have the best possible chance of remaining alive and well.")

As for the peace which followed, where he played his own constructive part, in the Treasury and as director of rationing in 1919, it raised what to him is the fundamental problem of our age: "The dispute between the politically organized classes, who have created the new system of state capitalism under which we live, and the unorganized majority. . . ." What he hopes for and foresees is "the mobilizing of the non-political classes . . . the revolt of the unorganized man against the organizations which threaten him increasingly with the destruction of his liberties . . . the restriction of the growth

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of the positive State. . . ." Nowhere to be found is the lost equilibrium between individual and group which alone makes either an army or a democratic society livable.

It is naturally impossible in a short review to do justice either to the thesis or the color of this altogether fascinating book. Here is English prose as only those born to it can write it—spare, humorous, expressive. Here are the essential problems of our time, hit off in brilliant epigrammatic phrase. (Consider, for example, the casual answer to Liberal consternation at Belloc and Chesterton's desire to return to earlier truths: "After all, the end of the seventeenth century is in any reckoning nearer than the millenium." Or his summing up of the tragedy of Liberal humanitarianism: "The world comedy derives from the world's division into two classes: those who wish to reform other people and those who wish to reform themselves. The world's tragedy is that the first class is commonly more successful than the second.") Here, too, is a humor which can define epigrams themselves as "the easy half of the truth—[which] is never the most important half." Here, in short, is one of those casually brilliant, yet deadly serious and pointed books which no one but an Englishman could write, and no American with an interest in the ideas underlying the present spiritual and political crisis will want to miss.

ALASTAIR MCKAY.

The New Poland and the Jews, by Simon Segal. New York: Lee Furman. $2.00.

IN GERMANY, where the Jews did not amount even to 1 percent of the population, Hitler succeeds in getting rid of them by the most cold-blooded and systematic anti-Semitic campaign ever carried through. Can such a policy be imitated in Poland with a Jewish minority representing 10 percent of the country's inhabitants? This is the problem of Mr. Segal's informative book.

The author, a Polish Jew himself, but educated in France, Switzerland and the United States, claims that the persecution of the Jews will prevent Poland from the rapid development and the intensive industrialization this country needs so badly, and will result in nothing but national disaster. Anti-Semitism, according to him, is a weapon only for those who have an interest in maintaining and nourishing the economic status quo. If those reactionaries succeed "in playing against democracy the false anti-Semitic card," then democracy in Poland is doomed and the country will be drawn into the Berlin-Rome axis.

Segal tries to develop his thesis with dispassionate objectivity, but he is not completely free of bias. With the irritability of a persecuted race he sees anti-Semitism as soon as an organization accents its Christian character. In this way he overrates anti-Jewish tendencies within the Catholic clergy. He conceals the large part played by Jewish demagogues in the field of anti-religious propaganda and moral destruction, which explains the hostility of priests against many Jewish literati and publications. But this should not be called the "anti-Semitic attitude of the Polish Catholic Church"; the Church which is named after the Christ of the House of David, Who was a Jew according to the flesh, can never oppose the Semitic race, but only un-Christian tendencies among Jews. A racial, Jew-baiting à la Hitler is intolerable in the ethics of the Church, and will never find clerical consent.

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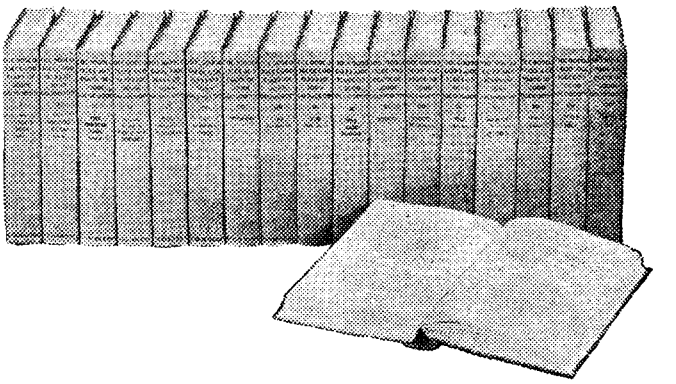

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CRITICISM

Art without Epoch; edited by Ludwig Goldscheider. New York: The Oxford University Press. $2.50.
Painters and Personality, by Sam A. Lewisohn. New York: Harper and Brothers. $3.75.

THE POINT of Mr. Goldscheider's excellent book is that we see as we are. Few art historians, however, have understood this. Formerly, for example, they said that realism had chiefly sprung up since the Renaissance (though they did admit the achievements of the Romans). But the present volume publishes two photographs (4 and 5) to show that the Egyptian sculptor, Thutmose, had composed male portraits, around 1370 B. C., which in their attention to character and lineaments, might well have been done today. Again there is an Egyptian wall-painting, "Wrestlers" (22), which in its flatness of surface and simplicity of outline is like Matisse. Pointing out many such parallels, this book insists that we have become aware of them only because in the last generation our own artists were doing something similar, and that, as a matter of fact, there is no other way in which the past can come to life again for any period.

This is not the only point of the book. It also suggests that certain types of human character are constant. The person of great social sympathy will see a hunchback in Alexandria (26) not dissimilarly from a Daumier. A man who feels the qualities in objects will not differ, whether he be a Pompeiian of the first century (21), a Chardin in the eighteenth (120), or a Braque today. A "Head of Christ" (29), from Cologne Cathedral, 970, will have the same type of northern religious depth as a Barlach of one thousand years later, and will resemble it in treatment, too.

The volume likewise reminds us that certain ways of seeing recur simultaneously, as if in response to a great global current. Leonardo's landscape of 1508 (87) has the same movement and height as that of Altdorfer (88) a little later in Germany, while the breadth and generosity in Titian's (89) is not incompatible with that of Durer's (90), a bit earlier. What is even more astonishing, each of these men, perhaps unknown to the others, was pioneering in the painting of landscape in and for itself. A further implication of the volume is that like social tensions will produce a George Grosz in post-war Germany, and a wood-cut master like Kuniyoshi a century before in Japan (135).

Such are but a few of the "connections" I see in "Art without Epoch." It contains very little reading-matter—only 500 words of independent text. The pictures tell the rest. A unique book therefore; also a seminal and frequently profound one.

In "Painters and Personality," Mr. Lewisohn, the American collector, has many just and mellow things to say about the painters he really cares for. Notably, that the French Catholic Rouault has something of the quality of the early Gothic gargoyles, that Van Gogh was a "typical ecstatic evangelist" with a peasant-like love of design, that Cézanne had a perfect balance of mind and emotion. There is something winsome about such appreciation.

Abundantly and resourcefully illustrated (there are 135 plates), this book indicates a new level in American collecting and consequently a new hope for the rise of art in this country. It is particularly to be recommended to schools and amateurs.

JEROME MELLQUIST.

DRAMA

The Herne's Egg and Other Plays, by W. B. Yeats. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

ALTHOUGH Mr. Yeats has always been identified with drama and the Abbey Theatre, he has never been particularly dramatic. His plays are apt to be obscure and overwritten, "Cathleen ni Hoolihan" being claimed by Lady Gregory as mostly her work. But Mr. Yeats has now adopted a new style, laconic and pungent. "The Herne's Egg" is loosely clothed in Celtic fashion, to be sure, but its underlying satire is of scant and tougher material. The story Yeats says he has had in his head since his twenties. The Kings of Connaught and Tara are fighting their fiftieth battle and fight it like gentlemen because they have forgotten what they are fighting about. But King Congal steals some of the Great Herne's eggs and is laid under the most ancient curse by the Great Herne's virgin bride. Disputing about the eggs at a banquet at Tara, King Congal kills King Aedh with a table leg, and the agreeable half-century of battles comes to a shameful close. In revenge, Congal and his seven men ravish the Great Herne's bride. On the mountain top, the Herne's bride, who declares her chastity still intact, is too late to save Congal's soul from passing into an ass's foal. Cries Corney:

> "All that trouble and nothing to show for it
> But just another donkey!"

"The King of the Clock Tower," which Mr. Yeats tags as his most successful recent play, and "Moon in March" are both based on an old Celtic legend of a severed head that sings. The legend seems a rather decadent version of the ancient myth of the slain Adonis and Yeats's plays, decadent variations of "Salome." In both plays the Queen does a dance with the head on her shoulder but "Moon in March" is the more brutal, as the head belonged in life to a very porcine swineherd. With Ireland safely Eire, Yeats seems to have lost the spiritual guidance offered by patriotism. His poetic imagination now plays tag with materialism as did T. S. Eliot's in the Sweeney era. His dramatic sense sharpened, he sinks to a lower stratum of folk-lore.

EUPHEMIA VAN RENSSELAER WYATT.

FICTION

Daughters and Sons, by I. Compton-Burnett. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. $2.50.

SOME people will consider this an exceedingly clever book. Not so many as would have considered it so about ten years ago, when our cultural inferiority to the English was less mythical than it is now, but enough for it to run into, say, two small editions. And it is clever but also exceptionally dull. Much has been made of the claim that Miss Compton-Burnett is a writer for the few and of the fact that one must make definite and conscious mental effort to follow the machinations and the talk, especially the talk, of her very clever, slightly nasty, English, country gentlefolk. And one gladly makes the effort, only to go largely unrewarded.

It should be said that the action takes place a generation or more ago, although the author keeps this a mystery for some time, and that 80 or 90 percent of the text is a conversation. The Ponsonbys are a large family, presided over by a matriarchal, slightly senile grandmother, whose petty viciousness is so unrelieved as to make her seem more at home in an asylum. But she is in an English country home and her widowed son, a

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semi-popular novelist, is a mild person who has permitted his mother to achieve a dominance over his children verging on the brutal. Only the date of the story's action makes plausible the fact that the oldest four of the five children have not left home.

The book is peopled with fifteen or sixteen characters, many of them stock characters in English novels, and all that saves it from sheer banality—six or eight of them team up at the end as in a musical comedy—is the author's cleverness. She has leaned too heavily on this however—one might even say that she has leaned solely on it—and there are whole pages where one is painfully aware that not four or five characters are talking, but four or five Miss Compton-Burnetts.

The dialogue is just, too, too clevah, don't you know! The Ponsonbys slay each other hourly with subtle remarks. The grandmother "hisses" unkindness; once she even hisses a fourteen-word sentence containing only one "s." The children are resigned but not meek. Father is the same, but slightly more forthright, if less witty than the children. Governesses come and go; sex never, or almost never, raises its hideous head; the daughters have no beaux, although both seem more than presentable. It all adds up to nothing, not even entertainment after the first chapter or two.

It could only have happened in England a generation ago, if there, and Miss Compton-Burnett seems aware of this and has re-created successfully the musty mores of the time. This and the occasionally incisive dialogue give the novel what value it possesses, and she does know certain types of people, although her young men are in general just a shade too effeminate. This, however, may be due to her putting feminine remarks in their mouths.

There are too many semi-literates being called geniuses today (witness Albert Halper, James T. Farrell), simply because they write on proletarian themes, for a highly literate person like Miss Compton-Burnett to go frittering her very real talent away on this sort of thing. But then again, perhaps she can only write about this kind of people. I believe her earlier books are about similar ones.

HARRY SYLVESTER.

Free Land, by Rose Wilder Lane. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $2.50.

CONTINUOUS fighting and hard work—continuous fighting against terrific cold, blinding blizzards, sharp winds, cyclones that leave a path of wreckage behind them, rain that comes at the wrong times or rain that doesn't come at all and results in drought, days of steady heat and the drying-up of the crops, sod that can't be broken, Indians, horsethieves, and then the hard work to build again after the destruction; work that punishes arms and shoulders and that makes hands bleed in the raw wind. All this is the story of the settling of the Dakotas.

Rose Wilder Lane calls her novel, "Free Land," but the land taken over by the settlers is by no means "free." David Beaton pays $14.50 to the government for his 320 acres; however, he pays many times that amount in money and work during the five years in which he cultivates the land and makes good his claim. Coming from his father's well-established farm in Minnesota with his bride, David settles, during the '70s, his sod shanty in the midst of great stretches of slough grass where there was "not one friendly tree to hold its branches against

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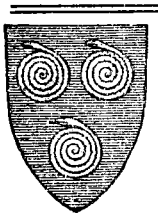
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awful space." Young, sturdy and ready to meet life, David gets his full share of adventure during those hard first years while the farm becomes workable and his family grows and increases his cares. Every year he thinks this year is the hardest and then lives to discover that next year is even harder.

The author of this novel is not successful in making her characters live. We do not really know David and his wife and his fellow settlers. At times her writing is careless and is usually as unadorned as her native Dakotas. But what we do know and feel from "Free Land" is the country itself. From the first chapter in which David's father wonders why the young never understand old people and what they have been through, until the last chapter in which the father gives David $2,000, to settle his debts and help him along, we actually feel David's struggles against the blizzards and the unyielding land, and "the monotony of day after day of steady heat and ceaseless wind blowing always southeast and always with the same pleasure, the same sound, that made him no more than a dull resistant core of himself."

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

The Handsome Road, by Gwen Bristow. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. $2.50.

THIS is a good book gone wrong. Though I felt some uneasiness even from the first page—to the end I recognized vividly described scenes and strong characterization—it was not until "The Handsome Road" was two-thirds over that it was apparent that Gwen Bristow, despite her great talent, has no literary conscience. Only too clearly she knows what she is up to; her oscillations between the rôles of sob-sister and hard-boiled realist are as cynically calculated as is her purpose to provide her readers with the heart-throbs and melodramatic action and the stuff that passes for glamor which made her previous book such a success. I must confess I find it a depressing, almost an obscene, spectacle.

"When I hear all these descriptions of the fine Old South," she makes one of her characters say, "I can't help wondering . . . how much of it was never dreamed of until after Appomatox." And for a time it seemed that she was going to provide us with another such description. Later the story of the aristocratic Ann Sheramy and Denis Larne becomes only a foil to that of the poor-white girl Corrie May Upjohn, the silver hinges on the doors of Ardeith Plantation serving to throw into sharper relief the filthy poverty of Rattletrap Square. Corrie May, intelligent and fiercely determined to rise in the world, sees that the war is being fought not for the Southern people but for the economic interests of their exquisitely mannered gentry. But she, not less than the Sheramys and Larnes, is ultimately ruined and ends her days in a squalor greater than even her good-for-nothing, loquacious father and her easy-going mother had ever known.

If the story had been left there, all would have been well. But Corrie May Ann is installed by a carpet-bagger politician in a fine old mansion and then deserted at a moment's notice when she is pregnant, while Gwen Bristow tugs frantically at our heart strings and squeezes our tear glands. From that point everything becomes really incredible. All of which is a great pity, for Miss Bristow has nearly all the gifts of a fine writer except integrity. Her reward, I prophesy, will be large sales again.

JOHN KENNETH MERTON.

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The Inner Forum

IT HAS recently been announced that Father Robert Jacquinot, S.J., has arrived from China for a brief visit in the United States, at the behest of the Red Cross. Even to the most assiduous reader of the daily press such an announcement will have little meaning, and yet Father Jacquinot emerges as one of the heroes of the Japanese-Chinese war. He is one of the French Jesuits who have long been entrusted with mission activities in the Shanghai area. His distress at the sufferings of non-combatants in previous warfare in the Shanghai region led him, the moment the Japanese began hostilities last year, to try to carry out his scheme for what has since come to be called the "Jacquinot Zone," a scheme which probably has little news-value compared with accounts of bombings, sinkings of gunboats, and other violent manifestations of war.

After long and intensely delicate diplomatic negotiations, Father Jacquinot succeeded in persuading both the Chinese and the Japanese governments to set aside an area in the city of Shanghai which should serve, under his governance, as a place of refuge for non-combatants. With a mere handful of assistants and the more than willing help of the population, Father Jacquinot has succeeded in establishing and keeping order in a segregated settlement, surrounded with barbed wire against the incursions of marauding bands of soldiery, which has given asylum to as many as a quarter of a million refugees at one time. And all of these people have been fed and housed and clothed, if not comfortably, at least adequately enough to prevent overwhelming suffering. It is interesting that the money with which to accomplish this has come not only from private sources, but from both the Chinese government and the Japanese Army and Navy.

Undoubtedly with Father Jacquinot's arrival in America his story will reach the public at large; it is a demonstration of the strength of Catholic Missions in the Far East and of both Japanese and Chinese faith in the goodwill and high integrity of the missioners. So deeply appreciated has been the work of the missionaries during China's great need that the Chinese government has published a 32-page booklet on the Chinese War Relief Activities of the Catholic Church.

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